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Democracy in Education--Education for Democracy

# AMERICAN TEACHER

May-June, 1937

Labor and Schools  
in Contemporary Society  
*Francis J. Gorman*

Pennsylvania Wins Tenure . . . . . Sara T. Walsh  
The Social Security Act . . . . . Dorothy W. Douglas  
Practical Democracy in Education . . . . . Irvin R. Kuenzli  
Answering Objections to the A.F.T. . . . . Harold C. Hand  
For the Right to Organize . . . . . Paul W. Preisler



Harvard's Liberalism  
Symposium on Organization  
Convention Call

OFFICIAL ORGAN of the AMERICAN FEDERATION of TEACHERS



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# A Request for Reader Opinion

(See Editorial)

1. THE AMERICAN TEACHER now appears bi-monthly during the school year. How frequently should it appear in the future? (Check in first column or write suggestion in second column.)

Issue at same frequency	Change frequency of issue as follows

2. The present number of pages is usually 40. How many pages should it contain in the future? (Directions as above.)

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3. Our present departments are listed below. Check in column A those departments you read; in column B, those departments you like; in column C, those departments you believe should be omitted in the future. In column D, indicate any suggested modification of present departments you believe desirable. (Other comments concerning present departments, or suggestions for *additional* departments, may be listed in question 6.)

	A. Departments read	B. Departments liked	C. Omit these departments in future	D. Change departments as noted below
Editorials				
President's Page				
The Classroom				
It's Happening Now				
Teachers' Union in Action: National News				
Teachers' Union in Action: News from Locals				
Among the New Books				
Labor Notes				
Correspondence				
Leading Union Labels				
Contributors' Column				

4. To what subjects should we give more attention? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Please add any comment which you believe will constructively aid the Editors in future work. \_\_\_\_\_

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# The AMERICAN TEACHER

VOLUME XXI

MAY-JUNE, 1937

NUMBER 5

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### A Request for Reader Opinion

Within two weeks after the appearance of this last AMERICAN TEACHER of the current season, the Board of Editors will prepare its report to the annual convention of the A.F.T., and will include recommendations for future issues of the magazine. . . . During the time that the present Board of Editors has been in office, it has endeavored steadfastly to make THE AMERICAN TEACHER a readable and effective instrument of A.F.T. policy. To help better gauge the degree to which these efforts are succeeding, it is necessary to determine the answer to certain questions listed on page 2. The Board of Editors asks A.F.T. mem-

bers taking a lively interest in this publication to indicate their responses to these questions and return the form to the address shown. A partial reply is better than none at all, but the most helpful replies will of course be those in which as many questions as possible are answered, together with reasons where appropriate. . . . The Board of Editors feels justified in asking readers to take the trouble to answer these questions with conscientious care. The basic purpose is to adapt the magazine more perfectly to the needs of the Teachers Unions it serves.

### The Wagner Act and Teachers

The recent decision of the Supreme Court, holding the Wagner Labor Relations Act constitutional by a five to four vote, in no way lays to rest the legitimate fears of the American people that social progress may be blocked at every turn by an ultra-conservative judiciary. Meantime, however, the National Labor Relations Act is firmly established as Federal law. It is hardly to be expected that the established constitutionality of this act will immediately put an end to the subversive practices of the great corporations. According to the report of the La Follette investigation, the General Motors Company, between January 1934 and July 1936, paid Pinkerton a total of \$419,850 for a spy system, and at the same time was employing Corporations Auxiliary Company as a sort of second line of defense against unionism in its plants. The respect of such companies for any law except the law of their own interests is indicated by the fact that in many cases the records subpoenaed by the Senate Investigating Committee were destroyed and it was necessary to confiscate quantities of waste paper and piece the evidence slowly together from the scraps. The private armaments, the elaborate systems for espionage and strike-breaking hardly indicate a temper on the part of the employers to yield to unionization without a bitter struggle. But heretofore the illegality of such methods has been a moral illegality, an offense against a profound conception of human rights residing in the people. That conception has now become articulated in the National Labor Relations Act. The efforts of employers to obstruct the organization of their workers has now become an offense against the state. However much or however little this fact may act as a deterrent to the employers, it is pro-



viding a terrific spur to the workers. To the vigor of the organizing drive, to the encouragement of victories, of strides taken, to the prestige of the C.I.O., is now added the sanction of law, the often effective support of the Labor Relations Board, the authority of the Federal Government. The Wagner Labor Relations Act gives acceleration to a movement that already sweeps forward in seven league boots. For us it is most fruitful to enquire what our own status is under this act. Recently the National Labor Relations Board operating under the Wagner Labor Relations Act was requested by the Secretary-Treasurer of the A.F.T. to make some statement regarding the status of teachers unions under the provisions of the act. The reply states in part: "The only opinion which the Board can issue must be reached after a full hearing of the evidence in a case. This is true not only of the merits of a case involving an alleged violation of the Act, but also is it true of any decision the Board may make to take jurisdiction under the National Labor Relations Act." The recent favorable decision in the case of the Newspaper Guild again brings to our attention the question of whether or not academic freedom cases in the public schools and colleges may affect interstate commerce within the meaning of the law. Our status in this connection is a matter of tremendous importance and locals should direct the attention of their legal advisers to a study of the possibility of securing protection under this act. A favorable hearing would have the effect of establishing tenure—at least so far as protection against discrimination for union activity is concerned—on a national scale. Teachers should have the same rights of citizenship as all other Americans.

### **Educational Retrenchment—A Fact**

Those "professional" people who have maintained a dignified silence during the past seven years and accused the American Federation of Teachers of crying "wolf" when all was well should read the latest bulletin released by the U. S. Office of Education. *Statistics of City School Systems*, which presents the latest available statistics concerning public school systems in 2,891 cities throughout the United States, reveals that public education was much worse off in 1934 than in 1930. The report reveals an alarming picture of nationwide neglect of education. Ever decreasing expenditures have resulted in "an average of 4.2 more pupils per teacher in 1934 than in 1930 in the regular and senior high schools combined." Ill-kept school buildings, less equipment and supplies, shorter school terms, a 42.5 per cent decrease in night schools, and an even greater curtailment of summer schools are other results. According to *Statistics of City School Systems*: "From 1930 to 1932 the cost per pupil for current expenses decreased 2.9 per cent, and from 1932 to 1934 decreased 14.7 per cent. In some cities the decrease amounted to 30 per cent. From 1930 to 1934 the average annual cost per pupil for general control decreased 16 per cent, for instruction 16.5 per cent, for operation 14.7 per

cent, for maintenance 42.2 per cent, for auxiliary agencies 24 per cent." The American Federation of Teachers must swell its numbers and enlist the aid of all progressive teachers and parent organizations in a common fight for decent standards of education.

**Youth In Action** All teachers should, of course, be interested in Youth and whatever Youth is doing. This is particularly true of the coming Youth Congress to be held in Milwaukee from July 2nd to July 5th. The nature of the meeting will be a "United States Congress". The Senate will be composed of delegates from the national organizations of Youth; the House of Repre-

## **The AMERICAN TEACHER**

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representatives will comprise delegates from local youth groups. Committee hearings will be held on all important problems that confront the people, particularly the younger generation. The importance and significance of this Congress can scarcely be over-emphasized. It is proof that today Youth is thinking, and also acting. Serious social questions concern them, and they are earnestly seeking their solution. In these efforts lie the promise and hope of the future of civilization itself. This youth organization takes practical and concrete steps to effect specific reforms. For instance, it is considering a plan whereby meetings of young people will be arranged in various cities in order to give support to President Roosevelt's Supreme Court reform. A national radio broadcast in support of the President is likewise contemplated. Thus their program is broad, rallying around it mass support and gaining the respect of the working and middle class of all ages. . . . Our problems become increasingly acute. Only the combined strength of all liberal and progressively-minded groups can win a decent place in life for Youth.

### Looking Toward the N.E.A. Convention

The National Education Association will hold its Diamond Jubilee Convention in Detroit between June 27th and July 1st. In greeting the N.E.A. on this occasion, the A.F.T. hopes that the progressive stand of the association on the vital educational issues of today, which was indicated by the New Orleans meeting of the Department of Superintendence, will be reaffirmed in Detroit. Many things have happened during the past year which should bring the N.E.A. into greater sympathy with the point of view of the A.F.T.; the future, we hope, will bring the aims of the N.E.A. into closer correspondence with ours. We want the teachers in the N.E.A. to understand the union teacher; we want the Teachers Union to be discussed and considered at the national convention, as it already has been discussed openly in the state conventions of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. All our members in the association who will be present in Detroit will have a splendid opportunity to bring the union, its programs and its activities, before the members of the N.E.A. In the next year—with new problems and struggles before the teachers—the prospect of friendly relations between the union and the association is a promise of educational progress in America.

### Teacher Affiliation with Labor

A recent bulletin of the Association of Chicago Teachers concludes that teacher affiliation with labor unions is not justified because labor without such affiliation will work for the interests of schools and teachers, and because such affiliation is inimical to the academic freedom and the unbiased attitude toward public questions which teachers are expected to maintain. . . . It is un-

doubtedly true that labor will continue to work for the welfare of the schools. Labor has also shown an unflagging willingness to help teachers in their fight for tenure laws, adequate salaries, and academic freedom. It does seem somewhat selfish and not a little presumptuous for teachers to accept these services and not be willing to affiliate with labor on a fraternal basis. The president of a state federation of labor recently remarked: "Twice in the last few years we have saved the tenure law for the teachers of the state, but we are getting just a little tired of fighting the battles of people who refuse to affiliate with us." . . . Furthermore, teachers owe it to the public schools to use their influence within the ranks of labor to insure that labor's educational program shall be in harmony with the best educational thought and practice. . . . The argument that "the cherished professional right of academic freedom is jeopardized by our alignment on one side of a social question" seems hardly tenable. P.T.A.'s and chambers of commerce are frequently aligned on opposite sides of social questions. Would our Chicago friends advocate that teachers should therefore keep themselves aloof from either body? Various religious denominations have recently come out much more explicitly than labor for social change. Should teachers therefore refrain from joining the churches? . . . The fundamental fact seems this: Both the labor forces and the teachers are dedicated to the task of securing a higher standard of living economic and cultural, for a constantly increasing proportion of the American people. Nobody is likely to contradict this fact. It is but natural, therefore, that teachers should join forces with labor, whose purpose and function are the same as their own. . . . The article by Harold C. Hand in this issue of THE AMERICAN TEACHER is a timely presentation of this point of view.

### Re-unite on Progressive Principles

The International Executive Board of the American Newspaper Guild recently commended the following principles to its constituent locals as a policy to be followed by the ANG in the current A.F.L.-C.I.O. controversy:

1. Full support of and cooperation with the progressive movement in American labor, particularly as represented by the Committee for Industrial Organization, and of all progressive forces within the American Federation of Labor.
2. Insistence on return of autonomy and democracy in the American Federation of Labor.
3. Unceasing effort for unity on the basis of progressive principles within the ranks of the American Federation of Labor, of which the ANG is an autonomous International.
4. Consistent and persistent opposition to any moves conducive to splits in state and local central bodies.

We reprint it here because the stand taken coincides so closely with the position adopted by the A.F.T. at its last convention.

### 1937 Convention

This summer's convention at Madison will be faced with many problems.

The action of the A.F.L. Executive Council in attempting to expel the C.I.O. and split the labor movement, is of very great concern to us as trade unionists. Nor can we disregard the role our organization is to play in the progressive anti-fascist movement. Yet we must remember that we are faced with many problems directly affecting the freedom and security of teachers in their positions. We are confronted by problems of tenure, salary, academic freedom and other elements of democracy in education. The fate of Federal Aid must be clearly discussed and understood, and long range plans must be

made in that connection. . . . A.F.T. vice presidents are now concluding the first year of organizing activity under the new regional plan. This new device must be evaluated and perfected, in accordance with the suggestions given in the organizational symposium, of which the second section appears elsewhere in this issue. . . . The question of child welfare must engage our attention. There is a growing desire in all parts of the country to democratize the school system. The outstanding task of our union is to work towards the solution of these problems. Most of us hope that the convention arrangements will permit these teacher problems to receive a very large part of the attention of the delegates.

## Practical Democracy In Education

IRVIN R. KUENZLI

THE CURRENT TREND in educational philosophy in America toward "Democracy in Education" and "Education for Democracy" is eliciting a demand for practical procedure in eliminating the militaristic and undemocratic administration and supervision which exist in many schools today. Consensus of opinion among progressive teachers indicates that training for the democratic way of life cannot well be taught in an autocratic school system.

The following suggestions for practical democratic procedure are gathered from correspondence with large numbers of representative teachers and personal contacts in numerous meetings of classroom teachers.

1. Administration and supervision based on militaristic control, fear, destructive criticism, humiliation before pupils, unfair rating systems, etc., should give way to a system based on coöperative effort, kindly helpfulness, constructive suggestions and inspired confidence.

2. Classroom teachers should feel free to seek advice from supervisors and administrators or to make constructive suggestions without endangering their status in the system.

3. There is evidence of a widespread employment by superintendents of a "grape vine" or "spy system" in which certain teachers "report back" all proceedings of teachers' meetings. This practice is distinctly contrary to the spirit of the Wagner Labor Relations Act and should be eliminated from the public schools of a democracy. Obviously no teacher who engages in such betrayal of his fellow-men is sufficiently honorable to teach boys and girls.

4. Teachers should have some voice in constructing the curriculum and a large part of, if not full authority in choosing text books.

5. Teachers should feel free to ask for proper health

conditions for themselves and their pupils. Many teachers state that they are called "cranks" if they insist on proper heating, lighting, cleaning, etc.

6. Favoritism should be discouraged by uniform salary schedules based on training and experience. A midwestern city reports a very low salary schedule with special awards for merit. These awards have been given only to five persons who actively support the "administration".

7. A classroom teacher should have as free an opportunity to state to the administration "just complaints" about a supervisor or principal as the supervisor or principal has to state criticisms of the teacher.

8. One large local of the American Federation of Teachers has been especially successful in eliminating annoying practices of certain principals by establishing a grievance committee to which unjust acts are reported. Annoying practices reported included opening teachers' mail, holding faculty meetings every lunch period, requiring teachers to lunch with the principal, extreme emphasis on details, etc.

9. Organized teachers supported by parents may assist in protecting or liberating the administrator from powerful pressure groups. It is a well known fact that autocracy in the schools often originates *above* or *behind* the superintendent.

10. A school system constructed in such a way that both teachers and pupils find joy and happiness in their work does not imply a "soft" and unauthoritative procedure. If democracy can be successful in a nation it must be successful in the nation's schools. Every school system in America should exemplify, in its method of organization and operation, the practicability of the democratic way of life.



# Harvard's Liberalism

## Myth Or Reality?

A STATEMENT BY THE CAMBRIDGE UNION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS ON THE  
DISMISSAL OF J. RAYMOND WALSH AND ALAN R. SWEEZY

Two of the leading members of the Cambridge Union of University Teachers, its president, Dr. J. Raymond Walsh, and one of the most active members of its executive council, Dr. Alan R. Sweezy, have been simultaneously given notice of dismissal from Harvard. It is clear that this action was taken by the President in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty, overriding the recommendation of the Department of Economics that both men be reappointed to their present positions as three-year faculty instructors.

Dr. J. Raymond Walsh has conducted the course in Labor Problems since 1933 and is the only member of the Department devoting his full time to this field. After the completion of his doctoral dissertation in 1934 he wrote several articles on his special subjects; his studies led to his being recommended for a Wertheim Fellowship by the Department of Economics. Under this grant he investigated the labor policy of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, and his conclusions are to be published in a forthcoming book. His course on Labor Problems has been so popular that in three years its enrolment has increased from about forty to over one hundred and twenty. While continuing his teaching, Dr. Walsh has been deeply interested in the actual conditions of labor in the United States, and has on numerous occasions put himself on record in favor of progressive legislation on behalf of the working class. Only recently, at a legislative hearing in Massachusetts, he vigorously opposed ex-president A. Lawrence Lowell's stand against the Child Labor Amendment.

Dr. Alan R. Sweezy has twice held fellowships from Harvard for study abroad. After completing his doctorate in 1934 he spent a half-year on leave of absence in Washington as a special research assistant to Professor Jacob Viner in the Treasury Department, in which capacity he prepared a confidential report on fiscal policy. He has become known as a specialist on corporate organization and finance, and has participated in teaching university courses in this field. Of late he has been devoting himself to the problems of finance capital; his articles on economic theory have appeared in American, English, and Austrian journals. Together with Dr. Walsh, Dr. Sweezy maintains that a strong labor movement will protect democratic in-

stitutions and aid in the attainment of what he regards as a more balanced economic system.

The university authorities have issued two statements in explanation of their course of action in terminating the appointments of these men. The first, on April 6, asserted that the case presented no extraordinary features and that the dismissals had been made "solely on the grounds of teaching capacity and scholarly ability". Whatever may have been the intention behind this statement, there can be no doubt at all about the construction which has generally been put upon it. The impression is conveyed, as clearly as official language can, that these men have shown themselves incompetent both as teachers and as scholars. Such an irresponsible and unsubstantiated slur on the reputations of two young instructors brings the good faith of the university in the entire affair into question.

A second statement, made on April 12 by President Conant to the Board of Overseers, explains that these men have been dismissed because other more promising instructors have been given the only available promotions, and it is not fair either to them or to their younger colleagues that they be retained in their present positions without promotion. Although, according to President Conant, this action is not to be taken as a reflection upon the teaching capacity of the two men, this second statement makes no reference to the first and certainly cannot be accepted as a satisfactory retraction. We have been advised that the original declaration constitutes sufficient grounds for a libel action against the university. In view of this, the Cambridge Union of University Teachers, in a statement issued to the press on April 16 declared: "We feel that the university owes Drs. Walsh and Sweezy a public retraction and apology." Thus far the university has ignored this obvious obligation.

We should like to emphasize, however, that this unfortunate aspect of the case should not be allowed to obscure the significant underlying issues which have been brought to public attention.

Harvard is commonly considered, and rightly so, to be a national institution. The attainment of its present position in the educational world has, however, depended essentially upon the good will and generosity of a small number

of men who have commanded the resources to build up its endowment to the present figure of roughly \$125,000,000. The dangers inherent in this situation are patent, but they become doubly so at a time when serious-minded people are forced to review the bases of our fundamental economic and political institutions. It is at such times that a great national university like Harvard should be most assiduous in seeking and encouraging the representation on its staff of all serious intellectual trends, however antithetical they may be to the social outlook of its financial benefactors. To follow such a course requires a degree of courage and self-restraint which is all too rare in the educational annals of this country.

We must say with complete frankness, and with a knowledge of the gravity of the charge, that Harvard has signally failed to live up to the above ideal of a truly national institution. This failure has manifested itself most clearly in the social sciences. At the very time when an increasing number of the student body is turning to the study of society, the administration chooses to freeze the budgets of the Departments of History, Government, Economics, and Sociology. The full significance of this course of action can be appreciated only when two things are understood. Firstly, that there is, in our considered judgment, not one single member of the social science departments, among those enjoying permanent tenure, who has sought sympathetically to evaluate and interpret the role of the labor movement in modern society. Secondly, that budget-freezing creates an apparent justification for refusing to appoint or reappoint young men who might balance the overweight of conservatism in the higher age groups. The following incidents, all of which have occurred within the past year, demonstrate that we have to deal not with an isolated instance but with a general trend.

When, as an exception to the traditional courses, the History Department in 1935-1936 offered a graduate seminar on the Working Classes in France, it was promptly abandoned. The lecturer, known as a Marxist historian, was unceremoniously dropped. Very recently, when the Government Department recommended the appointment of a well-known radical political scientist, its proposal was summarily rejected by the higher authorities. Only last year the Department of Economics eased out a young economic historian friendly to the laboring classes at a time when the retirement of Professor E. F. Gay left the field of economic history seriously understaffed. The Sociology Department is notorious for its espousal of reactionary doctrine in a pseudo-scientific guise. Last year several young men who dared to hold views of society at variance with the violent anti-working class bias of the head of the department were quietly eliminated.

The dismissal of Drs. Walsh and Sweezy from the Department of Economics now underlines and brings into the open this state of affairs. Both of these men have already attained reputations as capable economists; their scientific integrity within the framework of their social outlook is not open to question; they enjoy the confidence and respect of liberal and radical thinkers wherever they are known. Harvard has dismissed them on the grounds that they do not show sufficient promise to warrant promotion; and President Conant has emphatically denied that their views and activities have entered into the decision. We cannot accept this explanation until Harvard has proved beyond any possibility of doubt that, in the eyes of the university, promise does not imply the acceptance of conventional views. The whole trend of development in the field of social science strongly suggests that this is the case; the dismissal of Drs. Walsh and Sweezy may turn what was formerly a mere suspicion into a certainty in the minds of many. If Harvard wishes to refute this charge, let it appoint to its social science faculty men of professional rank who are as noted for their progressive pro-labor attitude as Drs. Walsh and Sweezy.

If this is not done, there will remain serious grounds for uneasiness about the effect of these dismissals upon the atmosphere of the university, especially with regard to the younger instructors. The circumstances of the termination of the appointments of Drs. Walsh and Sweezy, together with similar instances in the recent past, will operate as notice to younger teachers that advancement is best secured by the adherence, at least in public, to orthodox views and the pursuit of conventional inquiry. It will convince them above all that the exercise of their right publicly to express support of progressive labor legislation and engage in trade-union activities seriously endangers their academic careers. That this conviction is already not uncommon, that consciously or half-consciously it is acted upon, many of us can testify from our own knowledge.

President Conant has on numerous occasions extolled Harvard's liberal tradition and promised to carry the banner forward. We have applauded, but thus far his deeds have belied his words. If he wishes to vindicate his good faith and regain our shaken confidence, the time has now come to pass from generalities to concrete action.





# Labor and Schools In Contemporary Society

FRANCIS J. GORMAN

IN MY OPINION the teacher's role today is twofold: first, he must become a part of his own union, and second, he must teach others in the trade union movement, and their children, how to better conduct their daily affairs and contribute a substantial share in the correction of the thousands of grievances which go to make up the common man's life.

There was never a time in history when a functioning workers' education movement was more badly needed, and there was never a time in the history of the teaching profession when teachers needed a strong union more badly than they need one now.

Today the very foundation-stones upon which our educational system were built are being threatened. Forces are at work the world over which, if successful, would completely wipe out the principal tenets upon which the word "education" has grown up. In Germany and Italy we have seen the outcome of the success of the force of fascism. We have seen education made a hollow mockery. Eminent educators and writers of no less quality than Thomas Mann have had to revise their notions on politics and admit that they cannot function in their true relationship to the world under a regime of terror and superstition. There is only one force strong enough to crush the power of fascism. That force is an organized labor movement of which the professional workers, and particularly the teachers, are a very important part.

Leaving aside, for the moment, a discussion of the fate of education under fascism, the teachers have another very good reason for wishing to become organized. It is fundamentally the same reason why textile workers, automobile workers, steel workers and newspapermen must be organized: to protect their economic standards, to improve them, and to protect their rights to free thought and free assembly. Teachers, even in this country, are not immune to wage cuts; they are not immune to forced furloughs or layoffs, and they are not immune to discrimination for labor activities, any more than textile workers, steel workers, automobile workers or the newspaper reporter. Teachers, therefore, need their union. They need a 100% organized union, too, the same as we do, for as long as one teacher remains outside the organization the wages and academic freedom of every union teacher are endangered.

The second aspect of the teacher's role is that of teaching the workers, and their children. This necessarily divides it-

self into two parts: teaching the adults and teaching the youngsters.

Today there is a powerful surge for organization amongst all kinds of workers. Workers who hitherto were completely estranged from the labor movement are sweeping into it by the thousands. The department store workers are an example. Membership is increasing so rapidly that old bookkeeping methods have to be scrapped and newer and more efficient ways of cataloguing the membership and financial standing of union members must be found.

However, we must all bear one thought in mind: the new membership is not yet a stable membership. Many workers now in the union do not really know what the union is for. They only know that all their fellow-workers belong, and they don't want to stay out of the swim. The United Textile Workers of America has had a bitter lesson in the stability of raw union recruits. During the 1934 general textile strike, thousands upon thousands of workers were signed up in the union. Before the year was out, however, thousands had dropped out again.

Now there are many reasons for fluctuating, unstable union membership. The extreme terror which the employers used against the union members in southern mills had a great deal to do with our loss of membership. The drastic outcome of the strike settlement was another potent factor in driving many workers from our ranks. There are others too numerous to mention today, but one fact remains: if the union had had a workers' education department, equipped and ready to jump immediately into the field and consolidate the gains already made, by teaching the workers the meaning of the union, we would not today be a union with a membership of 100,000 textile workers. We would be a union with a membership of 500,000 textile workers—even if we had been only 50% successful in organizing our vast industry.

There can be no stability where there is little conception of the union. Even where there is a rudimentary concept of trade unionism there can be very little stability if there is ignorance about the many other aspects of our every-day lives. If the workers, for example, do not even understand the function and organization of their own industry, they cannot be expected to understand deeply the problems of their own union. Many, many textile workers do not know actually now that their industry is organized; what it is composed of; and how it fits into the general picture of the industrial United States.

Likewise, there can be little stability or permanence in a union membership which does not know the history of the working class in its own country, let alone the world; or which does not know the history of our economic order, and the consequent political movements surrounding it, from the early days up to now. If workers do not understand, or know something in a general way, about these things, they cannot know how to find their own places in the whole labor movement, or how to relate themselves to their fellow-workers in other industries.

This is one of the primary jobs of the teacher today. To be sure, the next generation is more important than the present one, but the present generation is ready to act if it receives but a little guidance from those who know theoretical things of help to the labor movement.

Union leaders are teachers, too, if they are deserving of the term "leader". But union leaders themselves have much to learn. A good leading trade unionist can successfully explain the meaning of the union to workers; he can successfully explain the character and organization of his industry, and he can even go back into the annals of trade union history and relate events now with those which happened in the past. But this is not the Alpha and Omega of trade unionism. If he is a *good* union leader he is also too busy with immediate things to be able to devote much time to giving the workers lessons in things which they have to learn about. He must call upon others to help him.

Too few competent teachers have given themselves to workers' education. I know that a teacher must eat just as anyone else, and I also know that there is very little money to eat on in the trade union movement. But we must have a beginning somewhere, and in every beginning there are, of necessity, sacrifices. There are lots of sacrifices in the workers' education field today. There are many men and women who have given up the chance for softer academic jobs at nice salaries in order to give to the working class some of their store of knowledge. We must have more.

Now, I do not believe that anybody should work for anybody else for nothing. I do not believe that the workers themselves would appreciate knowledge which was given to them on a silver platter. They should have to pay for their education departments. They must be organized, however, before they can pay, and they must know what the trade union movement stands for before they can be successfully and permanently organized. Therefore, we have to go back to the beginning again, and in the beginning there must be some sacrifices.

A great crew of alert, labor-conscious, and competent teachers must be developed in our public schools, too. Children of workers, for the most part, go to public schools. I am forced to except a large portion of the textile workers from this category, however, since they either do not have the money to send their children to school, or they live in mill-villages where they are taught just what the boss wants them to know.

However, children of other kinds of workers, more fortunately situated, are to be found in our thousands of public schools. I must say that I think some of the ideas which are born from training in some of our public schools are indeed vicious. A great deal of harm has been done, and is being done, in public schools today under the guise of "education". Utility interests, for instance, teach children to hate and fear public ownership of public utilities by writing the civics textbooks themselves. Children are taught that Negroes are inherently inferior to whites, and that southerners hate northerners, under the subterfuge of "history". Children are still taught that there is a Horatio Alger ladder up which they can climb to the presidency of the United States if they are good boys and girls and study their lessons. This kind of stuff must come to an end. This is not "education". It is not "free thought". It is deliberate propaganda handed out by the representatives of the vested interests, and administered to children by teachers who probably themselves do not understand just how much they are being kidded. Public schools, in my opinion, should undergo a complete overhauling with respect to curriculum and personnel. "Yes-men" and utility-written textbooks should be weeded out and educators and fact books should take their places. If there were a vast and powerful Teachers Union this could be done immediately. There must be organized, then, a Teachers Union big enough and strong enough that it can have a hand in what sort of material it feeds to the coming generations in the classrooms of our public institutions of learning.

There are two phases, as I said before, to the teaching problem as I see it. There is teaching grown-ups and teaching children. Both can be done at the same time, though in different ways.

If, in conjunction with the official bodies of organized labor, for example, the Teachers Union could organize a national workers' education department which would be a part of the organized labor movement, adult education would take one of the greatest forward strides of the century. You must reach the grown-ups through the organizations to which they belong, and the trade union is the most universal organization among grown-ups today.

What are some of the things which workers want to know, and which they ask teachers to show them as soon as they get into educational groups?

First of all, they want to know how to function in their union. They want the teacher to give them pointers on what the union really is in a broad sense, and how they should conduct themselves in union meetings and in conferences with their bosses. Principles of trade unionism, then, are one of the first things they want to know. In order to teach this, a person must have had some practical experiences himself, along with his theoretical preparation. The best place for a teacher to get practical experience is through active participation in his own union. If you can negotiate a wage raise out of a board of direc-



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tors, or a board of regents, you can negotiate a wage raise ten times more easily out of Morgan or DuPont.

Second, they want to know what their industry is really like. They want to know how it is organized industrially and financially. They want to know this, so that they can answer their bosses in their own language when they get technical during conferences. A wealth of research is needed constantly—up-to-date data on profits, salaries, prices, wages, etc. Each local union should periodically be supplied with all available material pertaining to its industry, so the committees can outsmart even their superintendents and foremen in conferences, and during negotiations.

Then they want to know similar facts, in less detail, about industry generally. This is necessary so that the employers can't mow them down with the old stuff about being at the head of the parade; so that the employers can't say: "We can't do this or that because we would be clear out of line with the rest of American industry."

Workers want to know the history of their own class, too. They love to run across stories about what the textile workers did in 1919; or what the railroad workers did in 1889; or what the miners did in 1912 and so forth. It makes them know that nothing is really brand new beneath the sun. It gives them a sense of strength and security to have history behind them, and to know that today they are still fighting the same battles which their fellow-workers fought many years before them.

Workers want to know what the working class in other countries is doing, and what the historical background of other similar unions in Europe or Asia might be. They want to know, in short, just what everybody else wants to know, and they, like others, want it in the light of their own particular experiences and problems.

Workers who understand the economic and political order, its shortcomings, its virtues and its possibilities, can intelligently take part in changing the world around them. As long as they are in ignorance of even their own immediate needs, they will have to be carried along by other groups less fitted to take the lead in making over our system than the working class. I say they will be "carried along". I mean only for a certain length of time. Finally, of course, the workers will take things into their own hands, when starvation and desperation drive them to it. Think, then, how much more intelligently they could bring about the changes needed, and which will most certainly be made whether we like it or not, if they had the advantages of a little rudimentary educational preparation, outside of the bitter lessons learned right in the mills.

What we need, then, is a stabilizing force behind our movement. One which will enable us to consolidate our gains and make them permanent. We need national workers' schools. A powerfully organized working class is one of the surest ways to social reforms, and an educated organized working class is by far the soundest way to social reform.

## LEADING UNION LABELS FOURTH SERIES

Facsimiles of other labels and shop buttons will appear in subsequent issues. We suggest that A. F. T. members cut and file these union insignia.

**Buy Union-made goods.**

### LAUNDRY WORKERS LABEL



Stamped on price list of all union laundries.

### GLOVE WORKERS LABEL



This Label is stamped in fine dress gloves and a cloth Label is sewed in the working gloves and mittens. Used on leather and canvas. Look for a white cloth label printed in blue.

### BAKERS AND CONFECTIONERS LABEL



People demanding this Label are not only supporting the Bakery and Confectionery Workers, but are also protecting themselves and their families against the spread of disease-breeding germs which exist in unsanitary bake-shops. The Label is granted only to sanitary bakeries. If a bakery owner lives up to the requirements of the organization, he may use the Label. These requirements are: (a) Sanitation and cleanliness in the shop; (b) proper treatment of workers; (c) reasonable hours of work; (d) payment of the Union wages. Bakeries not displaying the Label on their products do not meet with one or more of the above-stated requirements.

### HATTERS, CAP AND MILLINERY WORKERS LABEL



# Symposium On

*What is the best way to establish new locals? How can one maintain and build locals already established? These are questions with which a number of locals have asked us to deal. We have therefore obtained statements from those who are actively engaged in organizational work in various parts of the country.*

*This is the second instalment of these statements.*

## Pennsylvania Teachers Organize

Martin Rugg

### Pennsylvania State Federation of Teachers

**D**URING THE AUTUMN of 1935, an Organization Committee from Local 192 (Philadelphia) was first called together to plan the extension of the Federation throughout Pennsylvania. There were a few locals in the state, but they were numerically weak, and members were at the mercy of unfriendly school boards. It was necessary to the success of our legislative program, that these locals be strengthened and new unions be organized. The future of our union work was premised on the founding of a strong State Federation of Teachers that could mobilize teachers to the support of our program.

Lacking experience and precedents, the committee was obliged to try many avenues of approach, discard some, modify others and adopt new means as necessity dictated. The handicaps were great: an elaborate plan of having Central Labor Unions in the state help call meetings of interested teachers fell through because interested teachers were hard to find and C.L.U.'s with little time to spare could not be expected to do the preliminary work for us. State wide publicity was lacking, our knowledge of rural teaching problems was inadequate; but the biggest bar was the absence of a legislative session with its multiplicity of good issues, around which we could muster teacher support.

A few months of preliminary work revealed these handicaps. Even though the original idea was correct in principle, new methods had to be chosen. This change took place in Harrisburg, when in May 1936 the Pennsylvania Federation of Teachers became a reality. State locals had been called together before to discuss legislative problems, but this time it was considered necessary to become a permanent group, officered by union members all over the state, who could function rapidly in deciding policy, and represent us before teachers, public, and legislature. A state organizer was elected from Local 192, to work under

the regional Vice-President and coördinate all activity. Each union made itself responsible for organizing neighboring territory; a large teacher contact list was drawn up, and plans made to swing into action and take advantage of the next legislative session. A legislative program was planned and a Legislative Representative, Sara T. Walsh, was elected. Tenure was chosen as the issue upon which we should seek to win support, rural teacher needs were studied, and appropriate bills drafted. A publicity committee was to plan a campaign and make our work known to teachers and public. The Organization Committee's function was broadened. The legislative correspondence was initiated, and committee members were to meet individuals and groups of teachers in the state to gauge the effect of our work and start new locals.

The plan has been successful. The three committees, Legislative, Publicity and Organization, worked together to make the Pennsylvania Federation of Teachers a powerful organization, recognized as such by legislators, and other teacher organizations. Our locals grew in numbers; new unions were begun, and within one year from the meeting in Harrisburg, state membership jumped over 100%.

A successful legislative campaign has culminated to date in the enactment of the strongest Tenure Bill in the United States. The strong opposition of a few members of other teacher organizations acted as a boomerang. Thousands of teachers were thus apprised of our work, and hundreds of them acting individually or through their associations asked us for information, supported our bills, joined our old locals, or started new ones. Teachers recognized in the Federation legislative program, the spirit of teacher control, and reacted accordingly.

A well planned resume of legislative work was given weekly in "News Flash". From time to time, briefs of bills, appeals for action, and statements were included in a weekly letter sent to our contact. Back copies of THE AMERICAN TEACHER and Philadelphia Teacher are being distributed. Non-union teachers everywhere reacted favorably to this publicity. Our material was posted on bulletin boards, read and discussed at faculty meetings, and passed from teacher to teacher. The general undercurrent of teacher sentiment is reflected in this letter from a western Pennsylvania teacher: "... I would state that I have appreciated very much the sending of Federation literature, and I also know of the effectiveness of your work in Harrisburg. Mr. ... of the House is a personal friend, as is also Mr. ... of the Senate, and both have mentioned your lobby



# On Organization—2

and the power of the same as compared to that of other teacher organizations."

The Organization Committee has been fortunate in capitalizing on the successful part the Federation played in Harrisburg. The intensive work of circularizing, visiting, speaking and correspondence by all our locals is paying dividends. Organized labor is willing to cooperate, after having seen union teachers in action. Non-union teachers have seen their grievance taken up and fought for by the Federation, and their sympathies have been enlisted in a score of communities where the groundwork for new unions is being prepared. The State Federation of Teachers has become a powerful factor in teacher legislation and teacher organization. With the assurance of tenure, we can strengthen our organization drive. To minimize wasted effort, we believe that some manual of organizing, embodying the experiences of other locals, should be drawn up soon. The present system of financing: allotting money to the vice president, appealing for funds from teachers, selling some literature, and having new locals contribute to the cost of organizing them, is, at present, satisfactory. Organization of Pennsylvania teachers has finally become, not a hope, but a promise of the future.

## Organizing WPA

Local 453

New York City

A GOOD MAJORITY of the 8,500 workers on WPA-Board of Education projects in New York City work in schools and community centers where there are an average of five or six WPA workers. Other individuals may be the only WPA worker in the center. Still others are "floaters", usually teachers who teach in as many as seven or eight centers a week. Scattered throughout the five boroughs in hundreds of centers, many of these workers have never been contacted to join the union, or when they do join on their own initiative, they are not drawn into the activities of the union, and are likely to drop out after a few months of membership. This situation is particularly acute on the largest education project, that of adult education.

For months after the organization of our union last spring, the adult education project was poorly organized, except for a few centers where there are at least thirty workers organized into what we call a job location council. Soon after the organization of our union, the administration of this project divided the city into "areas" of the project,

twelve in number, with a supervisor in charge of each area. The workers on the project adjusted their organization to the new set-up by organizing area divisions of the union along the administrative area lines. Meetings of workers in one area are called in a location convenient to the majority of workers, usually at some place within the area. Each area has an executive committee, a grievance committee, other committees decided upon by the area, and a treasurer. The executive committee of the project, consisting of experienced union members, coordinates the organization and activity of the areas.

Although this form of organization has been in existence only a few months, the response on the part of workers in the areas, the drawing in of new forces never before contacted by the union, indicates that, despite possible weaknesses in terms of decentralization, the area form of organization is a distinct improvement over previous organizational devices on the project. It is too early to make final estimate of the value of the area set-up until the experiment has been given more time to be worked out. It is safe to guess at the present time, however, that a "decentralized" method is one effective way of organizing workers who are scattered over a large area, and not easily contacted by the union.

Another possible solution is that suggested by the "floating" treasurer system of the elementary school projects. Most of these projects also have workers that are widely scattered in terms of job locations, and are constantly being shifted from center to center. It has been found impossible to know, at any particular time, where most of the workers on the projects are located. Several months ago, the largest of the elementary school projects, remedial reading and arithmetic, set up a system of treasurers, whereby one person is assigned several schools in the neighborhood of his school to pick up dues of any union member he finds located in any of the nearby schools. During the lunch hour and after school, a treasurer makes appointments with other union members in nearby schools. As a result of this set-up, a noticeable improvement in dues payments on these projects has been noted. The logical step is to organize these "floating" treasurers into "floating" organizers, who not only contact workers to pick up dues, but bring the latest union news and campaigns and "talk" organization to the workers. From the beginning many of the floating treasurers did organizing work. It is now the task to see that they all do. The union is confident that the result will be a rise in union membership and dues, and the activation of new forces.

## Help From Trade Unionists

Hugh De Lacey

*President, Washington Joint Council of Teachers*

IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING that any given method must be varied to fit the individual locality and teacher, but we have had success here through combinations of three main methods.

In one county we went directly to the president and secretary of the Saw Mill and Timber Workers' Union. We found that they had organized every other craft in the towns of that county and were delighted that there should be one more to conquer. Together we composed a letter which was mimeographed and sent by members of the Saw Mill and Timber Workers' Union to every teacher in the locality we set to be organized. Our idea was that if the parents sent this letter by their children, the teachers would see that they were being asked to join the labor movement by members of an organization which included most of the voters in their district.

The letter stated that the A.F.L. had always been interested not only in decent wages and working conditions for its members but for a sound system of public instruction for their children; that the parent had derived many benefits from his membership and was certain that teachers, too, could profit from being organized; and that on such a date and at such a place a meeting would be held at which representatives of the A.F.T. (whom we named and identified) would be present to explain what our organization is and how it works, and also that representatives of the local labor movement would welcome the teachers and give assurances of support.

The letter was effective. We had the largest organizational turn-out since Local 401, Seattle, itself was organized. At the meeting everything moved smoothly. Explanations were made and objections met. We had previously found one teacher in that district who was willing to take the initiative. He joined forces with our speakers and we got enough signatures for a charter.

In another county we had the good fortune to discover three teachers who had long been convinced of the necessity of organizing. We had several conferences and much correspondence with these teachers. They went seriously to work canvassing the county and soon were able to get a meeting of other interested teachers. A delegation went over and found everyone there already so well convinced that very little effort was required to get enough signatures for a charter.

Another method we are beginning to employ with great effect is founded on a situation which may be peculiar to our part of the country. Backed by the labor movement, we were able at the general elections to put in a trade union teacher as State Superintendent of Schools. Lately

we have been inviting the State Superintendent to report to meetings of class room teachers what he is doing, what problems he finds, and what hope there is of finding solutions. Even though we do not ask him to make organizational talks, and do not expect him to do so, our own representatives are able to point out that we can give a State Superintendent who is working for Democracy in Education and Education for Democracy greatest support, and gain from his administration the greatest benefits, only if we are able to present our views to him in a way that can be recognized as coming from a body of people who have discussed them and come to an agreement rather than from a few disgruntled and scattered persons or from an association dominated by superintendents and principals.

We are also planning a variation on this method. The Legislature is in session now and has several of the bills friends of the A.F.T. have introduced. We hope to arrange meetings and have members of the Legislature, together with a representative of the State Office of Education, address us. The legislators we invite will speak on the chances of our legislation and urge teachers to organize in order to secure the legislation they have always wanted.

These are the principal methods we have been pursuing. At present we are in the process of returning a labor man to the School Board. We hope by our energy and effective work to impress teachers not now in the union that this is their organization and the only place they can find effective expression of their needs.

## Following Contacts

Mary Herrick

*Vice-President for Illinois Area*

THE METHODS OF ORGANIZATION we have used are varied. In Southern Illinois we have obtained a list of all the teachers in a number of towns worked out as having a population with union sympathies, and the locals in that area are combing the lists for personal contacts. In the same areas, labor leaders are being reached for contacts. One local is already chartered as a result of this activity.

The active local in Bloomington held a conference of nearby teachers on March 11, at which I was present, and there was a conference of teachers from the central part of the state the next day, for which I stayed to meet people from several good sized towns. Two particular cities are our goal for this area for this year. In northern Illinois we met with seventy teachers in Rockford on January 26 through the offices of a friendly university extension professor who had suggested a discussion of teacher unionism. In the suburban area around Chicago, contacts have been made in four western suburbs with a view toward a western suburban local. There have been two



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regional organization conferences and there will be a third soon. A constitution proposed for a state organization in Illinois has been sent out and is coming back with ratifications.

## Practical Hints

David H. Pierce

Chairman, Publicity Committee, Local 279

LOCAL 279 of the American Federation of Teachers on February 12, 1937, celebrated its third birthday. We have 2250 members out of approximately 3900 in the Cleveland school system.

Our growth has been amazing and we attribute it to several causes:

1. No official is paid. The sole exception has been the granting of one-half year's salary to the president while on leave of absence from his classroom duties. Excessive union activities necessitated this step.

2. In publicity work we follow the principle that the

best defense is a strong offense. The union does not have to apologize for its existence. It never does.

3. Our workers expect no reward except the respect of their associates for laboring in their behalf.

4. We do not hesitate to go before school authorities with legitimate requests for improvement of working conditions.

5. We seek and obtain the coöperation of the Cleveland Federation of Labor. We do not overestimate our strength. The power of an individual comes from its association with other unions in the community.

6. Recognizing that teachers live a somewhat cloistered life, we do not hesitate to call upon Newspaper Guild associates to set us straight on political trends in the city. Before we act, we get facts.

7. We never stop our membership campaign, although it is not always going at full blast. Every classroom teacher is a potential member.

8. Absolute democracy prevails at all times in union deliberations.

## Job Saved In Akron

Akron, Ohio, international rubber center and scene of victorious unionization struggles of the United Rubber Workers, reports a decisive victory for academic freedom.

Last March, Mr. Chalmers Stewart, president of Local 287, Akron Federation of Teachers, and president of the Board of Trustees of the Akron Central Labor Union, was refused recommendation for his eight-year professional teaching certificate by his principal, Mr. J. Ray Stine. Mr. Stine's action was motivated, according to statements in the press, by what he termed "personal and non-professional reasons". In conversation with Mr. Stewart, Mr. Stine assigned for his drastic action such reasons as that Mr. Stewart was irreligious, a bad influence in the community, radical, mean to other teachers.

As soon as this refusal to grant the certificate was made known, the local immediately set up an academic freedom committee of Akron liberals, and introduced a resolution in the Central Labor Union condemning the whole high-handed procedure. The Central Labor Union appointed a committee to investigate the whole matter further.

On April 2, Mr. Stewart appeared before the State Board of School Examiners and received their promise to send an investigator to ascertain reasons for Mr. Stine's "refusing political, social and religious freedom to Mr. Chalmers Stewart". Mr. Michael J. Eck, secretary-legislative agent of the Ohio State Federation of Teachers, pre-

sented the case at a hearing before the Senate Educational Committee in connection with the vicious certification law in force in Ohio.

Mr. Eck also interviewed the principal, Mr. J. Ray Stine. Mr. Stine conceded that there was no question about Mr. Stewart's teaching ability. (Local newspapers have carried extensive accounts of Mr. Stewart's splendid academic records at Central High School, where he teaches English.) As justification for his broad statement that Mr. Stewart did not possess "the proper influence in the community", Mr. Stine—who is said at one time to have accused persons of theft on the basis of a vision he had in the deep of the night—tried to connect Mr. Stewart with a recent demonstration of students, the demonstration being in protest against Mr. Stine's allegedly high-handed methods of dealing with pupils in his building. Mr. Stine admitted that his conclusion was based solely on hearsay and inference. Moreover, Mr. Stewart's application for a teaching certificate had been refused prior to the student demonstration.

In consideration of the obvious discrimination involved, the State Department of Education announced on April 22 its unanimous decision that Chalmers Stewart was to be given his eight-year professional certificate. This decision has heightened the teacher morale of the whole state. It is a smashing victory for trade unionism and academic freedom in Ohio.

# President's Page

OUR WORLD is probably in one of the four major transition periods of all human history. The first was the dawn of history; the second the decline of the Roman Empire; the third the rise of the forces of the modern era, which began about the time Columbus discovered America; and now, let us hope, an orderly transition from "rugged individualism" to a socialized economy.

Confronting us are such major choices as: Dictatorship versus Democracy; Individualism versus Collectivism; an economy of abundance versus an economy of scarcity; work for all versus unemployment for millions.

In a period of doubt and confusion, when men everywhere are struggling to know which road to follow, it is even more necessary for education to be free and untrammelled. But the fear of the loss of liberty must not make us oppose educational progress. Recently the president of the University of Michigan warned against threats to "academic freedom and institutional independence". The president of Swarthmore referred to "the terrible danger" before education. What was it these presidents feared? Could it be that they were apprehensive that large gifts from men of great wealth might subtly induce educational subservience? No, the great danger they envisaged was Federal subsidies! One of them refused to permit any student to accept them!

Academic liberty is a most precious heritage, but it is not threatened by educational grants from the Federal government. It is far more in danger from selfish financial interests and the forces of fascism. Mankind is receptive and eager for ideas and inventions in the material world; we are grossly intolerant of the new and the best in the social world. Here the inventor is likely to pay the penalty with the loss of his prestige or his job. The recent outrageous discharge of J. Raymond Walsh and Alan Richardson Sweezy from Harvard, the one a national Vice-President of the American Federation of Teachers and the other a secretary of the Harvard local, should bring home to us all that we do not have academic freedom now. The fact is that the average instructor in an American college who dares to think differently from his professional superiors or takes action threatening the economic royalists so that he is discharged, has less protection than a worker in the General Motors Corporation. This is not true if he belongs to a strong progressive teachers' union, but even then his status is precarious unless all teachers everywhere belong.

All of this simply means that it is a duty of primary importance to organize more and more units of the American Federation of Teachers. We should without question have

a local in every college in the country in every major city. We should have at least 100,000 members. The question then before us is how can we organize as quickly and as effectively as possible. Perhaps we can move forward in unison with other agencies toward the common purposes in which we can all unite. Certainly, in organizing teachers we need new methods and programs that will meet existing needs.

The excellent symposium on organization in the last issue of THE AMERICAN TEACHER challenged the attention of us all. Consider the following suggestions among others:

1. Our literature needs to be rewritten both in appearance and content.
2. We must work more through existing teachers' organizations where this is feasible. Perhaps we have needlessly antagonized school administrators and organizations in the past. Let us secure their co-operation. The work of the locals in Tennessee in trying to make the State Association more progressive is admirable.
3. Effectiveness of teacher organization in the last analysis depends on "delivering the goods." When a local makes a genuine *gain* for education and for teachers, that "talks" more loudly than thousands of leaflets. In this connection the work of the University of Washington deserves credit for successfully defending academic freedom in two cases and helping to secure additional funds from the legislature for the university.
4. We must secure help from organized labor. This involves the securing of aid from the executive councils of the state federations of labor as well as the local unions.
5. Each local member must be an *active, able representative* of the union.

As we come to the period of the summer and our National Convention, we can move forward by seeing that each and every local is represented at Madison. This is destined to be one of the most important conventions in our history. We may have to decide questions of major importance in regard to labor affiliation and building. In any case we must plan for what will undoubtedly be the greatest organizational campaign we have ever attempted. In the forward march of humanity toward a richer and deeper life, the teacher has both a unique opportunity and an obligation. Let us begin to move now.

JEROME DAVIS.



# *For the Right to Organize*

## St. Louis Local Wages a Winning Fight

PAUL W. PREISLER

The fifteen-year old anti-union rule, which prohibited St. Louis public school teachers from joining a trade or labor union, or an organization affiliated with a trade or labor union, was repealed on May 11, 1937 by the Board of Education of St. Louis by a vote of eleven for and one against repeal, after a two-year campaign by Local 420.

During the first year of the campaign, about sixty resolutions opposing the rule were passed by labor organizations, and many committees visited the Board.

Since these protests and resolutions did not produce the desired effect, Local 420 decided to enter the coming Board of Education election in April, 1937 with its own candidate running on a progressive union platform. Two important issues involving the educational system were at stake. First, the repeal of the anti-union rule and second, the bi-partisan election law which in effect confined the school board election to members of the Democratic and Republican parties.

The election law for Board of Education members of the City of St. Louis was so framed that the ticket was restricted to the Democratic and Republican parties and prohibited the running of any other party candidate or even a non-partisan one, even though all candidates are required to present a nominating certificate containing about 8,000 names. The very fundamental issue of democracy was involved here. If an election could legally be restricted to members of two parties, and if citizens could not nominate by petition or elect by writing in the name on the ballot, it would be but one step further to the one-party system of the fascists.

Late in November, Local 420 announced its campaign to break the bi-partisan election law and to remove the anti-union rule by nominating its president, Paul W. Preisler, to the Board of Education of St. Louis as a non-partisan labor candidate. The main problems were obtaining the 8,000 nominating signatures, and the court contest of the nomination which was sure to follow.

Mr. Preisler and his supporters addressed nearly fifty meetings of labor unions and solicited signatures at labor union meetings and functions. Labor unions instructed their officers and members to assist in obtaining the signatures, a procedure previously unheard of in the St. Louis labor movement.

Meanwhile, protests against the anti-union rule began to pour in to the Board of Education from locals of the A. F. T. and central labor unions, stimulated by the communications on the subject from the national office of the A. F. T. As many as eighteen were received and announced at a single meeting of the Board. The Progressive Education Association convention voted to investigate the Board

and its anti-union policy and condemned such practices. The union and its campaign practically became a daily issue in the public press.

Early in March the Board of Election Commissioners of St. Louis refused to accept the nominating certificates containing nearly 10,000 names, collected mainly by labor unions, on the ground that the candidate specified was non-partisan. Mr. Preisler immediately filed suit to compel the Election Board to place his name on the ballot. A real fight was on. On March 31, six days before the election on April 6, the court granted the writ.

The election for mayor and aldermen was practically forgotten. All eyes were focussed on the School Board election.

In the five days remaining before the election, Mr. Preisler, as the Teachers Union non-partisan candidate, received the endorsements of fourteen labor unions and four organizations sympathetic to labor. The Teachers Union succeeded, in a four-day campaign, in inducing 11,076 voters (nearly six percent) to support its candidate—a number considered by even old-line politicians as being phenomenal under the conditions.

The immediate effect of the election was a renewed demand for repeal by various labor and civic groups sympathetic to labor. The matter was referred to a committee of the Board and an open hearing was scheduled for Monday, May 3.

At this public hearing, not a single person spoke against repeal and many representatives of organizations for it. Four of the twelve Board members stated they would vote for repeal.

Then the teachers' associations, the "company unions", got busy and teachers were confronted on Friday, April 30, with a secret poll to determine the "teachers' attitude" toward repeal. Local 420 stated that no group of teachers had the right to tell others that they could not belong to a union and that the results of any poll could not be used to determine the right to union membership; the question involved was not union recognition but the right to join a union if one wished to join.

On Friday, May 7, the Board committee held a closed session with the teachers' association representatives who announced to them the result of their poll—455 for repeal and 2243 against—and declared that the Board should therefore allow the anti-union rule to remain. In spite of this, the Board committee voted 3 to 0 to recommend that the anti-union rule be repealed.

Without further discussion, on May 11, the Board concurred in the recommendation of its committee by a vote of eleven to one and the anti-union rule was no longer in existence. Union organization will now go forward.

# The Social Security Act And The Unemployed

DOROTHY W. DOUGLAS

WHAT SHOULD BE THE ATTITUDE of American teachers toward our present Social Security Act? I believe one of constructive but thoroughgoing criticism. We desperately need to build up, not break down, the bases for real social security in this country. But our present act is so inadequate that forward-looking teachers, together with social workers and other labor and professional groups, have found it necessary to band together to demand a thorough revision of its principles along the lines of the Lundeen (Workers) Social Insurance Bill.

We have done this because we stand for all-round protection, nationwide in scope and covering all employments, for workers whose earnings are interrupted. We, like the social workers, appreciate the necessity for maintaining family standards of living during periods of unemployment, during old age, and also during the circumstances of sickness, accident and death of the breadwinner, so that children may not enter adolescence handicapped for life by distressing experiences they have undergone. And we realize that the period of distress is just as devastating to the employee of the small employer as to the employee of the large, to the non-resident of a particular state as to the resident, to the worker in one line of employment as to the worker in another.

The unemployment insurance features of the Social Security Act are particularly inadequate. The act was passed in direct response to tremendous popular pressure against the intolerable conditions produced by the great depression. That depression at its depth saw some seventeen million persons unemployed and even today, with business long since reviving, some nine or ten million persons are still unemployed. Nor can any economist promise that—short of a war!—there is any prospect of returning in the near future to the relatively low level of unemployment prevailing during the 1920's. Yet the act makes no provision for this fact. It leaves altogether out of account all the present unemployed and their families; it makes no provision for any protracted future depression; through the scale of benefits recommended by it to the several states and now incorporated in their laws it leaves the families of even the insured wage earners with not enough to live on; and it bases all its calculations for security upon the low unemployment figures of the 1920's.

The way this sleight of hand is arrived at is through the formula of "payroll contributions". The assumptions underlying it are as follows: First of all, it is assumed that really nationwide insurance for the unemployed, out of Federal taxes, would be too expensive—too expensive, that is, for the owners of concentrated wealth whom the Federal government alone can effectively reach. For of course, someone is paying the bill for all this suffering in any case: under the present arrangement, the workers and small farmers and professionals. (Payroll taxes mean raised prices, so the worker as consumer is bearing a double burden.) Next, it is evident that the surest way to protect the government from any possible claim for financial responsibility in the matter is to have the unemployment insurance laws state laws, not Federal, and then to provide that each state must assume full responsibility for keeping its funds "actuarially sound"—the Federal government will pay nothing, either as a regular thing or in case of emergency. The states in turn raise their funds out of payroll taxes from employers (and in ten states employees as well)—being "encouraged" to do so by the fact that if they do not, the Federal government will tax the employers a small amount anyway and keep the money in Washington where it will do neither the employers nor their workers any good.

The whole pressure upon states in such circumstances is in turn to be niggardly, and this is precisely what they have been. No state has undertaken to give any direct financial aid to its scheme, and the workers of the country remain bottled up in the absurd framework of "payroll contributions". As if a three per cent rate of contribution could take care of a twenty per cent rate of unemployment!

The resulting absurdities of the benefit provisions are obvious. Less than half the workers of the country are covered even nominally. (Teachers are among those left outside—the public school teachers because they are public servants, and the private school ones because they work for non-profit-making institutions.\* All workers in agriculture and domestic service are likewise excluded, and many, many others.) Then to qualify for benefit a worker must first have been steadily employed for a considerable time previously; benefits are not over fifty per cent of wages, there is no allowance for dependents, there is a "waiting"



period of several weeks before benefits may be paid, and benefits run for a *maximum of fifteen or sixteen weeks out of the year*—although even in good times the average period of unemployment runs longer than that. Finally in bad years, even the stated benefits could not possibly be paid!

We need a national law, nationally administered, with the Federal government assuming full financial responsibility. We need an act that is more, not less comprehensive, than we have now. All attacks upon the Social Security Act that aim to reduce its scope and leave yet more to the states are to be condemned unreservedly. This is the case with the attacks leveled upon the act by big business during the election campaign: they would have left all the aged to a "means" test and all the unemployed to further "experimentation" by the states! We must meet all such flank attacks with our eyes open. It is nationwide

social security, with an adequate financial basis, that America has the right to demand for its workers. There is no surer way to encourage continued inadequacy and terrible irresponsibility, in this as in many other fields of labor and welfare legislation, than to continue to operate our protection piecemeal, chopped up into forty-eight competing jurisdictions.

DOROTHY W. DOUGLAS.

\*Teachers who, in addition to their salaries, receive "wages" in other part-time positions or during leaves of absence or after their retirement, and thereby qualify for Social Security, may receive the legal old-age benefits in addition to their teachers' pensions. The exact conditions and sums of such benefits may be ascertained by request of the National Office of the A.F.T.

## Pennsylvania Wins Tenure

SARA T. WALSH

THE TEACHERS of Pennsylvania have placed upon the statute books a tenure law which ranks among the best of such laws in any state. In this achievement two things are significant; namely, the influence of the tenure principles of the American Federation of Teachers upon the final legislation, and the influence of the strictly classroom teacher groups in securing actual passage of the measure. Tenure has been an intermittent campaign of Pennsylvania teachers for the past twenty years. However, it was not until the A.F.T. entered the field in 1935 that a tenure bill worthy of the name was sponsored by any organization. The A.F.T. bill of that year was the first Pennsylvania tenure bill ever to include the principles of open hearing upon dismissal and right of appeal to the Court of Common Pleas. When Representative Kenneth Harkins introduced the final tenure bill of that session these features were included as the core of the bill. The Harkins bill was killed by the Republican-controlled Senate.

With the opening of this session the effects of the original A.F.T. bill were clearly evident. Of the fourteen tenure bills introduced, eleven granted the right of appeal to the courts. The remaining three placed the appeal in the hands of the Department of Public Instruction. Such a contrast is the best indication of the soundness of the A.F.T. principles.

Long before the opening of the session, the A.F.T. at-

tempted to bring the Pennsylvania State Education Association into conference for a joint bill. Three invitations were evaded by President Mary McAndrews because of a desire to await the leadership of State Superintendent Dr. Lester K. Ade. The quality of this leadership was evinced at a conference finally called by Dr. Ade. There his legal representative presented as the only necessary tenure legislation an addition of about five lines to the School Code, to require written charges stating specifically the reason for dismissal and to provide a hearing (closed). It should have been evident from this that so far as tenure was concerned Dr. Ade was not representative of the teachers of this state. However, the P.S.E.A. preferred to await the call of Dr. Ade for further conferences on a joint bill.

Early in February the steam was put under real tenure at the classroom teacher tenure conference attended by the Luzerne County Teachers, the State Teachers League, and the A.F.T. The P.S.E.A., slow to accept, also attended. When at the suggestion of the A.F.T. the representatives began to consider essentials to be agreed upon, the P.S.E.A. delegates pleaded other engagements. Pressed to stay, because of the undoubted benefits that would accrue to the 60,000 P.S.E.A. members as a result of the conference, the delegates nevertheless left after deriding the statement that the conference bill would have the support of the Earle administration.

With the air cleared of suave evasion, the conference turned toward tenure realities. The A.F.T. bill as the most comprehensive was the basis of discussion and was checked item by item. Two modifications were agreed upon, forming the working basis for the new bill to be introduced by Senator Mundy.

This bill, S 369, as it passed the Senate contained all of the essential protections and had picked up but one objectionable addition: namely, a clause excluding supervising principals unless the major part of their time was devoted to teaching. Not at all strangely, this move of the school directors actually benefited the bill by splitting away from old controls the group with the smallest stake in the supervisory set-up and sending them clambering for a seat on the steam-roller.

From the moment the bill was introduced the job of teacher organizations was to ward off attacks upon the bill and to concentrate teacher support back of it. How well this was done in Philadelphia is indicated by a sharp contrast in organizational performances. Upon the heels of the introduction of the bill the Philadelphia Teachers Association indulged in a week of "short and snappy" legislative rallies devoted solely to bitter tirades upon the principle of court appeal. Failure to estimate correctly the strength of the forces behind a measure affecting their members is inexcusable in organizational leaders. Deliberate attempts to obfuscate membership upon a measure wholly beneficial is completely discreditable.

The P.S.E.A. Southeastern District Convention presented an opportunity to bring over two thousand teachers to enthusiastic support of the bill. Once more the chief speaker for whom the audience was adjured to remain, devoted himself to a violent diatribe against the bill. In addition, the administration education leaders who spoke (two of them are P.S.E.A. members) were also curiously lukewarm to this bill of their own administration.

An attempt by the A.F.T. to evoke an unequivocal statement of position at this point from the leaders of the P.T.A., the P.S.E.A., and the Public School Council failed. Mr. Zahn of the Council disdained to reply; Dr. Clark of the P.T.A. responded with a message which stated that "the organization of which I have the honor to be president has stated its position to its members for whom information is available through the regular channels". Mr. Kelley of the P.S.E.A. was "in favor of S 369 with amendments".

The A.F.T. in contrast to this had in one day caused 2,000 telegrams to be sent to the House from Philadelphia calling for support of S 369 as it passed the Senate. From Cambria County alone, where an A.F.T. local had just been formed, 7,000 postcards were sent with the same request.

Amendments appeared in the House Education Commit-

tee and added to the difficulties of John Bohn who was battling effectively to push the bill along and keep it intact. Democratic bolting from caucus decisions reached the point where the State Democratic Chairman had to be brought in frequently to Committee meetings to keep the strays in line.

A public hearing on the bill before the House Education Committee was arranged. This hearing was preceded by a delegation of over a hundred and fifty A.F.T. people from Philadelphia wearing buttons requesting the open hearing and court appeal. Before the session opened the House presented the novel scene of a knot of teachers stationed around each legislative desk on the floor. The buttons bespoke tenure; the teachers talked tenure. Within a few minutes a general transfer had taken place. Many legislators were wearing the buttons and were talking tenure and wondering how many of their other constituents had the same interest in the bill.

The public committee hearing was the most dramatic of such events in a long period of legislative history. Arguments at this type of open hearing are of minor importance as compared with the demonstration of support given the bill. Over two thousand teachers attended to demonstrate just that support. Chief speaker for the school boards was Mr. Walter Biddle Saul from Philadelphia who turned his back upon the 2,000 teachers and addressing the committee directly, raised a criticism of a technical detail to a denunciation of the whole bill, finishing with an appeal to scrap the whole bill and to assert the simple right to go to court which teachers have always had.

First speaker for the teachers was the writer, followed by Miss Baker of the League. The P.S.E.A. was represented by three. Miss McGlynn was the mop-up speaker and she placed an effective axe through each opposition argument. Later Dr. Clark of Philadelphia stated briefly from the floor that his organization supported the bill.

The chief fight on the bill came, as was expected, on its second reading in the House several days later. The story is too long and too detailed to recount in full. Suffice it to say that certain Democratic caucus decisions were broken, and the Democratic floor leader had the task of holding party members in line. The Republican opposition introduced several weakening amendments; these were all voted down, with comfortable vote margins. When several different weakening amendments were introduced by Democrats it required intensive lobbying on the part of the State Federation of Labor President, John Phillips, and party pressure from the Democratic floor leader to win victory for the teachers.

Seated on the speakers' rostrum during second reading were representatives from the A.F.T., the Luzerne County Teachers, and the State Teachers League. The hearing



lasted more than seven hours, and settled the bill completely.

The third reading was but a formality. There was a general scrambling of legislators to get on the bandwagon. At this point, the only time in the entire campaign, P.S.E.A. officials appeared in the Capitol in significant attendance ready to make a dignified but unerring dive for the Governor's office in the event the bill was to be signed. Ever vigilant, they were able to scent the signing of a bill from points a hundred miles distant and were able to be present themselves, meticulous and unwearied, graciously ready for the official photograph to be taken.

That ceremony placed the law on the books. It marked a campaign which revealed the true friends of teachers—staunch, inexhaustible men like Dr. Mundy and Mr. Bohn, great steadfast groups like organized labor. Moreover, as relentlessly as the surgeon's knife removes dead tissue from living matter, the events of this campaign have removed the necrotic effect of the supervisory-controlled groups from the vital mass of classroom teachers of this State. The classroom teachers this time recognized clearly what they wanted. They knew how to get it. They should put this new gain to work to achieve wage justice for the underpaid and to bring to the children that type of education which they deserve and have not to date received.

### The Pennsylvania Tenure Law

#### Whom does the bill protect?

Teachers, principals, supervising principals, directors of vocational education, dental hygienists, visiting teachers, school secretaries (if selected from eligibility lists), school nurses certified as teachers, and any regular full time employee duly certified as a teacher.

#### Is there a contract?

Contracts must be signed not later than the date when the employee enters into service.

#### What are the dismissal reasons?

Immorality, incompetency, intemperance, cruelty, wilful and persistent negligence, mental derangement, wilful and persistent violation of the school laws of the state.



#### What is the protection for present employees?

Employees with present contracts not expiring before May 6 must have contracts renewed May 6.

#### Is there a probationary period?

No.

#### Can women be dismissed because of marital status?

No.

#### What type of notice is given?

- (a) Detailed written statement of reason for dismissal.
- (b) Announcement of time and place for hearing.

#### When is the hearing?

Ten to fifteen days after written notice.

#### What is the type of hearing?

Public unless otherwise requested.

#### Can the teacher have witnesses subpoenaed?

Yes.

#### How does the board arrive at the decision?

By a two-thirds vote.

#### When is the decision given the teacher?

Within ten days after the hearing is concluded.

#### Does the teacher receive salary if vindicated?

Salary is returned for time lost.

#### What is the appeal provision?

- (a) To the Courts of Common Pleas.
- (b) Appeal expires thirty days after receipt of board decision.
- (c) Hearing set ten to twenty days after petition.
- (d) *De novo* hearing upon request.

#### What protections are there against demotions in rank or type of position?

Right to hearing and appeal as in dismissal, if employee refuses to consent to demotion.

#### May the employee waive his rights?

The contract specified in the tenure law stipulates that no waivers shall be recognized, whether orally or in writing.

### Welcome to New Locals

- No. 491 Bennington, Vermont Local
- No. 492 Bloomington, Minnesota Federation of Teachers
- No. 493 East Boroughs, Pennsylvania Federation of Teachers
- No. 494 Tri-County, Illinois Association of Federal Teachers
- No. 495 Lowell, Massachusetts Federation of Teachers
- No. 496 Minnesota Adult Education Teachers Federation
- No. 497 University Teachers Union (Montana)
- No. 498 Galesburg, Illinois Federation of Teachers
- No. 499 Meeker County, Minnesota Local
- Gary, Indiana Teachers Union No. 4 has reorganized
- No. 500 State College, Pennsylvania Teachers' Association
- No. 501 Beaver County, Pennsylvania Federation of Teachers
- No. 502 Anaconda, Montana Teachers' Union
- No. 503 Clatsop County, Oregon Federation of Teachers
- No. 504 Lake County, Illinois Federation of Teachers
- No. 505 Erie, Pennsylvania WPA Teachers

# Answering Objections To The A.F.T.

HAROLD C. HAND

**C**ERTAIN OBJECTIONS to labor affiliation for teachers are raised so frequently that it is worth-while to examine them and to answer them.

1. Teachers as an organized body must keep entirely free of any minority groups if they are to be able to test and weigh facts, to praise the good and condemn the bad.
2. If teachers affiliate with the A.F.T. class enmity and warfare will result.
3. Affiliation with the A.F.T. will prove inimical to the interests of our democratic social order.

Now let us look at these contentions and the assumptions underlying them:

*1. Teachers as an organized body must keep entirely free of any minority groups if they are to be able to test and weigh facts, to praise the good and condemn the bad.*

This statement, to my mind, is based on three assumptions, namely: 1. Educators have been neutral. 2. Educators are now neutral, and 3. Education should be neutral. I believe all of these assumptions are either false or fallacious.

Let us take the first two together. Let us deal with uncontroverted facts, not with unfounded opinions or pious hopes. Let us draw on a careful and scholarly research recently completed by Professor Merle Curti under the auspices of the American Historical Association. Curti, one of the leading historians in the United States, opens one of the chapters in his report by quoting the following statement made by Roger Babson:

However successful organized labor has been in many ways, it has never succeeded in directing the education of its children. Capital still prepares the school books and practically controls the school systems of the world.

Here are Curti's conclusions from his study of American educators:

"In regard to the cause and cure of the farmer's economic difficulties, educators in general accepted uncritically the point of view of financiers and industrialists. . . . While educators were anxious to ameliorate the farmer's lot, they had only disapproval for any real challenge, such as the Populists represented, to the dominant and prosperous lords of the city. . . . It was common for educators to show an even greater sympathy with the position of industry and finance in its struggles with labor than in the tension between conservative wealth and the farmer. . . . Strikes were condemned [by educators] as inexcusable attacks on the social order. . . . When President Cleveland

broke up the Pullman strike with Federal troops, the NEA commended him for his wisdom and firmness. . . . In no instance, apparently, did the Association [NEA] take cognizance of the causes of strikes or suggest other realistic means for the solution of grievances. It appears that violence in strikes was not condemned when used by owners of factories and railroads or by the government. . . . Educators accepted in general the business men's outlook and consciously or unconsciously molded the school system to accord [therewith]. . . . Thus from the days following the surrender at Appomattox, education rendered assistance to industrial and financial capital in its struggles with other groups. . . . Despite these allegiances, the majority of educators subscribed to a classless society. . . . They were probably seldom conscious of having a class bias—they were simply supporting the order of things, which, as they had grown up in it, seemed inevitably right. . . . They thus substituted the doctrine that there ought not to be a class struggle for an inquiry into the actual tensions of society. The effect to this substitution was to leave the causes of tension almost untouched, and to provide a specious justification for whatever element in society happened to have the economic upper hand, and a specious condemnation of opposing elements. . . . Rarely did educators. . . . express sympathy with the militant struggles of workers. . . . With few exceptions, they [the educators] not only advanced social ideas thoroughly in keeping with those of the industrialists; they also aided in struggles with farmers and workers."

If any further proof of the falsity of the first two assumptions ("Educators have been neutral"; "Educators are now neutral") is needed, it is abundantly at hand in another carefully conducted research by another eminent historian also made under the auspices of the American Historical Association (Howard K. Beale, *Harpers*, Oct., 1934): ". . . Lawyers, merchants, manufacturers and bankers, representing a very small proportion of the population, control the boards. A recent analysis of several school boards found them to include the wife of the manager of a cement company, a retired hay and grain merchant . . . a lawyer whose firm floated school bonds and fought government ownership of utilities, a chemical manufacturer who made a fortune out of government contracts during the War, a manufacturer of cigars, a lumber merchant, a grain speculator prominent in anti-labor fights, . . . a contractor, a traction company president bitterly opposed



to unions, . . . several corporation lawyers, several bankers, and several wealthy old ladies. . . . The influence of these business men gives them power over superintendents and teachers and subjects taught in the schools. They see that certain subjects are tabooed: government control of railroads in a railroad town; labor questions and company police in a steel town; criticism of the mill owners in a textile town; the fact that a particular local business is not paying its share of school taxes."

Apparently, if we are to accept the findings of Curti and Beale, American educators have *not* been neutral in the past, and they are *not* neutral at the present moment.

Now let us point out the fallacy in the third assumption, that "Educators should be neutral".

By this time it is apparent to all who wish to discover the truth that with a few noteworthy exceptions the big business and industrialist group, with which education has become affiliated, is opposed to the extension of free public education and is opposed to freedom of teaching in the school. (I refer to the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Industrial Conference Board, the utilities, the great associations of manufacturers, bankers, etc., *not* to the small shop owners and middle class business men.) They do this not because they are demons or wicked men, but because it is to their economic interest and advantage. Again we draw on the research of Howard K. Beale. The improvement of the general welfare involves change; obviously, if unemployment and its attendant misery, frustration, and disease are to be removed, the situation which bred these conditions must be changed. Beale: "This [change] would necessarily disturb powerful elements which benefit from the old order. It is these elements that control the schools, and they have always opposed change. They seek to use the schools to 'develop character', to instill 'respect for law and order', to make 'good citizens', and 'to teach patriotism', but, when analyzed, these terms all mean to the interested groups unquestioning acceptance of things as they are." Thus we see that the group with which educators have consciously or unconsciously aligned themselves are opposed to freedom of inquiry in the classroom, and we also see *why* they are so opposed. It is to their economic interest and advantage to prevent freedom of teaching in the schools.

Now what of my allegation that this group seeks, usually secretly, to cripple the schools financially? Let us go to Chicago for an illustration. There the so-called "Citizens Committee" which succeeded in seriously crippling the schools of that city was discovered to be made up of some eighty-five industrialists and big business men, whose children almost without exception were enrolled in private schools. As representatives of the great property holders of Chicago, it was to their financial advantage to cripple the schools of that city. And *these* are the groups with whom Curti and Beale have found educators, with certain notable exceptions, unwittingly to be serving!

Let us as teachers recognize the unpleasant fact that

Curti and Beale have found us in reality (though not in theory) aligned against a numerically large group (I refer to organized labor) which is *now* and which all through history *has been* working and fighting for the extension of free education and for freedom of teaching. Listen to what A. M. Simons wrote in his book *Social Forces in American History*: "There is no other single force making for education that can be compared with the working-class movement, and there is no escape from the conclusion that to this movement, more than to all other causes combined, is due the common school system of the United States." Read the careful research conducted by Philip H. V. Curoe entitled *Educational Attitudes and Policies of Organized Labor in the United States* for more abundant documentation of the fact that organized labor *always has been* and *now is* working and fighting for the provision of adequate educational opportunities for all the children of all the people. Read therein a scholarly treatment of organized labor's five-point program concerning teachers and teaching. These five points are 1. increase of teachers' salaries, 2. recognition of the right of teachers to organize, 3. better tenure laws, 4. teachers' voice in the administration of school work, and 5. academic freedom—freedom to teach the truth, to present all sides of all controversial issues. Organized labor endorses the principle "that men and women in becoming teachers do not thereby surrender their rights as American citizens". Let me quote from Beale's research in this regard. "It [organized labor] has insistently demanded that more attention be paid in the schools to a realistic study of economics and social problems of the new industrial order. Furthermore, labor has long fought the teacher's battle for freedom. It has pleaded for emancipation of schools from propaganda and the teachers from pressures of particular groups. It opposed the Lusk Laws and Loyalty tests."

In the light of these facts, I would like to know by what process of reasoning our critics arrive at the conclusion that we should be neutral in the struggle between two groups, one of which is openly fighting for the extension of free educational opportunities and that freedom of inquiry which is the prime essential to the preservation of our democracy, the other of which is more or less secretly seeking to cripple the schools financially and openly throttling freedom of inquiry in the name of patriotism. And yet, *in the name of democracy*, we are called upon to be neutral in such a struggle!

## 2. If teachers affiliate with the A.F.T. class enmity and warfare will result.

This contention is most extravagant. I had supposed that no one could read a daily newspaper with its accounts of strikes, labor injunctions, the use of armed company guards, etc., and remain ignorant of the fact that there exist situations of intense and often bitter struggle in our society today. However, this merely bears out Professor

Curti's observation that educators in general have "substituted the doctrine that there ought not to be a class struggle for an inquiry into the actual tensions of society". A little affiliation with organized labor might help to educate the educators in this regard.

**3. Affiliation with the A.F.T. will prove inimical to the interests of our democratic social order.**

If, as I have attempted to demonstrate, it is true that education is the life blood of democracy, and if it is true that organized labor *always has been* and *now is* working and fighting for an adequate education for all children (not because organized labor is made up of altruists, but because it always has been, is now, and probably always will be to its economic advantage to have free schools and

freedom of teaching), it is hard to see how anyone in possession of the facts could argue that "affiliation with the A.F.T. will prove inimical to the interests of our democracy". On the contrary, it seems clear that democracy cannot endure unless we break away from the domination of those groups who find it to their economic advantage to cripple the schools financially and to throttle freedom of inquiry in the classroom. In this regard, I believe that we should unite with the group which, more than any other, has made possible the establishment and the maintaining of a system of free public education dedicated to a search for truth and, through the possession of truth, to the development of a better and finer life for all of our people. I refer to organized labor.

# The Classroom

## Curriculum in Modern Schools

The following article is the first to appear in THE AMERICAN TEACHER from members of the Associated Experimental Schools. The several Associated Experimental Schools are all non-profit making and cooperative. They are perforce private schools but their chief concern is public education. Five are in New York City: the City and Country School (ages three years through thirteen), The Little Red School House (ages four through thirteen), Walden School (ages two through eighteen), and the two schools at 69 Bank Street—The Harriet Johnson Nursery School (ages two through five) and The Cooperative School for Student Teachers (a training school for teachers in progressive schools). One is a suburban school, Hessian Hills School in Croton, N. Y. (ages two through fourteen), and one a rural school, Manumit in Pawling, N. Y. (ages six through thirteen).

This report illustrates educational attitudes common to the seven schools as they function in school practice. These attitudes are by no means the exclusive possession of these particular schools. Indeed the recent conference in New York showed that these educational attitudes are shared by an impressively large body of union teachers in the public schools.

Modern schools, from nursery schools to teacher training institutions, take into account something over and above the content; they add something to the school's traditional job as a transmitter of subject matter. This added something has come in part from a study of children in action and in part from a study of the present-day world in which children, and all the rest of us, act. Learning takes on a more vital quality when it comes through direct experience instead of merely through sideline criticism or reports of others' experiences. Moreover, vigorous experience demands some expressive outgo to complete the learning process; a child has not really learned a fact in the sense of having incorporated it into his own being, unless he does something about it either in the way of tying this fact up to another fact, thereby creating a new thought, or in the way of translating this fact into his own expression through words, painting or other art medium.

If the full implication of these briefly stated beliefs is accepted, the curriculum will perforce be organized to give opportunity for this active intake and outgo at every stage of maturity. Social studies cease to be a neat body of information, begun at twelve.

Instead they stretch to the broad implications lying back of all human relations, personal, current or historic, and become an inherent part of school life at any age.

Work and workers assume outstanding importance in the curriculum. Controversial issues instead of being banned are welcomed into the classroom as challengers to thought. Thinking and living in the school become an adventure suitable to the age of the child. It is an adventure for the teacher, too, in her new participation in school administration and in the community. Even the parent achieves a functional relation in the organism which is the "whole school".

Mr. Studer's article shows the practical way that these beliefs have moulded the curriculum in his particular group of thirteen-year-olds in a particular New York City environment.

LUCY SPRAGUE MITCHELL.

## Study of a Puerto Rican Community

IN THE SPRING of 1936 the Eighth Grade of The Little Red School House closed their books and turned to a study of the living world around them. All year they had been learning from books about the development of American life since the Civil War and now they plunged into an exploration of a segment of that life as yet uncharted by books.

A trip to the Bureau of Naturalization started them off. Here they saw men and women in process of becoming citizens, something they had read about but had never witnessed. On this trip as on those that followed, the children betrayed their adolescent interest in how people feel, as the following discussion shows:

**John:** I was impressed most by the room with men sit-



ting on a bench, like a judge, firing questions at the poor immigrant—

*Nancy:* Like a machine gun—"Where were you born? Are you married?"

*Peter:* Oh, well. These people ask questions as a matter of course. They don't mean to be hard-boiled. They have hundreds of people before them. It gets monotonous.

*Henry:* I'm going to ask my father how he felt when he came before the officials.

*Joe:* The examination seems to work like this: to the officer the immigrant is just another man in line. To the immigrant it is a new and important experience.

Would it be possible to study the life of newcomers to our shore? The interest of the class was at a high pitch and they were eager to go on. Several immigrant groups were considered and the Puerto Ricans finally chosen. Technically the inhabitants of Puerto Rico are citizens, but they present many problems of the immigrant from another country. We chose them because so little has been written about them and we wanted to explore virgin territory. We were ambitious. Besides, they are a recent group in this polyglot city and we wanted to study a group in which the impact of a new country was still fresh.

Objectives were outlined in a discussion which prepared the way for the first trip:

*Richard:* We could see what the people do for a living.

*Laura:* We could visit homes and see housing conditions.

*Mary:* We could see what they eat by going to markets and grocery stores. See if they bring their own food from Puerto Rico.

*Nancy:* We could see whether people take advantage of them, as was done to the immigrants we read about.

*Teacher:* How could we do that?

*Ralph:* We could see what they charge in the district and then go outside and see what it costs elsewhere.

*Aaron:* We could see what the schools are like.

*Mary:* We could see if there is any antagonism toward other people.

*Teacher:* How?

*Laura:* By seeing how they treat us.

*Elsie:* But we can't judge them by how they act to us. They may shrink within themselves and say nothing. Then we will think them dumb but they are really not.

One of the boys said he thought we ought to start on the trip in a "spirit of adventure, expecting anything to happen". Certainly we began with little more at our disposal than that spirit. There was very little information to guide us and that was out of date in this rapidly changing section of the city. A few reports buried in the files of welfare agencies were all the teacher could find in the way of studies of the district.

The first exploratory trips were made to grocery, music, and book stores. We questioned clerks and customers, the children hanging back at first but finally participating in the interviews. We were polite and interested and everywhere met with friendly receptions. The owner of a music store demonstrated native instruments made of gourds. Grocers told us about the diet of the Puerto Ricans. Customers volunteered information. Usually we went in small groups, staying in the district all forenoon and eating a lunch of Latin-American dishes at a Cuban workers' center.

A group of children who had been studying housing clamored for a chance to visit a Puerto Rican home. We hovered around one morning, uncertain how to make the approach, and finally told our desires to the proprietor of a cheap lunch stand, a native of the district. "Just ring a bell and tell 'em who you are," he said. "They'll be glad to receive you."

We climbed some dark flights and rang a bell at random. An old uncomprehending woman opened the door and we were relieved when her son-in-law and daughter came to the rescue. They were alert, friendly and hospitable. The eight children and teacher filed into the tiny living room and stayed for an hour. The young husband brought out a tiny photograph which he proudly handed around. It was a picture of the little tropical village which he had left a few years before. They talked about their lives and we told them about our school. When the time came to leave they begged us to stay. It was as though we were leaving old friends.

A colorful side of our exploration was the visit to herb shops filled with the mingled odors of pungent roots and leaves, in rows of glass jars. The Puerto Ricans had brought with them their medical lore of a pre-scientific age. Quackery flourished alongside of honest home remedies and some shops specialized in "snake oils for every sickness". In one of these we met "Professor" Riviera, self-styled genius, who sold luck rings which had been worn by a black cat in the back room of the Oriental Dream Shop.

Gradually we gathered a fairly rounded picture of life in one of the worst slum districts of the city. We found many evils and met some people who were in a small way working toward a better life for these slum dwellers.

The public library proved one instrument for good in the district. There special provisions are made in the limited way possible in a public library, for meeting the cultural needs of young Puerto Ricans. A native Puerto Rican works with groups of children, reading to them, dramatizing books and even translating favorite Latin-American folk tales into English. This librarian took time to tell about her work and answered many questions.

A trip to the Union Settlement house put us in touch with people who could speak with authority on many problems plaguing these slum dwellers. A Henry Street nurse told about the appalling amount of tuberculosis, aggravated by bad housing. Racial discrimination was discussed

by a Puerto Rican social worker.

By this time each trip was coming to be more and more of an adventure. The groups would come back bursting with their experiences and eager to share them with the rest of the class. The interest in things Puerto Rican was so keen that when a Puerto Rican superintendent of schools visited the class he was detained for two and a half hours by many questions fired in rapid succession.

There were always unexpected, unpredictable experiences. One of them happened at the corner of Central Park where we stopped to rest after several weary hours of tramping sidewalks. A ragged boy came along, fishing for treasure in a refuse can. We started a conversation and learned that he was thirteen years old and in the fourth grade. He had come to New York the year before from a little tropical town where he could go swimming in the warm ocean waters every day. As he unrolled the drab story of his life, we recognized in the boy before us an embodiment of many of the problems the social workers had discussed.

The children were learning to evaluate the testimony of the people we met. Their judgments were pretty sound. They disliked the American druggist who cynically sold the "magic" herbs in his drugstore, and they said he should know better. They detected racial prejudice when it cropped up.

When the children began to sift and classify their findings they began to realize how hard it is to arrive at the truth. At first they had a tendency to accept statements at their face value but when the testimony began to be contradictory they were forced to winnow out the chaff.

Education in the Puerto Rican section puzzled them at first. The mothers of two boys in the class were public school teachers and the son reflected the usual estimate

of Puerto Ricans as being of low intelligence and having little interest in learning. The librarian gave an entirely different picture. She portrayed them as eager to learn and very responsive to the program of the library. After learning about the overcrowded schools in that district and of the language handicap which these children face, we came to see that there was probably something wrong with the public schools, rather than with the Puerto Ricans.

The group pooled all its findings into a general report which covered housing, labor, health and education. Maps were made showing the need for slum clearance and more playgrounds. Several children carried cameras and their pictures were mounted on a chart showing the findings of the class.

The class did not stop at an objective analysis of conditions as they found them. They made a series of suggestions for bettering conditions. All agreed with a girl who said the government should "tear down the old fire-traps and put up modern buildings". Education, they thought, could be improved by cutting down the size of the class and having teachers who knew the Spanish language, teachers who were sympathetic and understanding.

From a study of the Puerto Rican section in New York the class went to a study of Puerto Rico itself. The entire project covered two months of work. Poems, drawings, character sketches and stories were written, based on the studies.

At the end of that period there was a definite conviction on everyone's part that this was the most valuable two months' work of the year. Horizons had been widened. The walls separating school and society had been broken down.

NORMAN STUDER.

## Labor Notes

### IS THE SIT-DOWN LEGAL?

THE legality of the sit-down strike has been hotly debated by labor leaders, columnists, and congressmen long enough for some of the smoke of battle to have cleared. It should now be possible to come to some sane conclusions on the questions of trespass, seizure of property, and lawlessness, as related to the sit-down. . . . Any major industry may properly be regarded as the joint result of the capital of the employer and the labor of the employee. The contribution of the worker is real and indispensable; no industry could have been built without its active assistance. To this extent, then, a worker can legally be regarded as a partner in his industry, and not as an implement to be discarded when convenient. This view is fortified by the increasingly significant trend whereby workers, highly trained in specialized technique, become virtually unfitted

for a new occupation. Such considerations stimulate the view that the sit-downer is not trespassing, since he has a degree of property right in his job, and therefore has a legal right to take his place within the plant. . . . The charge of "seizure of property" carries the connotation of seizure for destruction or conversion, and yet the evidence in sit-down strikes is all to the contrary: meticulous care has been taken to avoid injury to machines, and strikers make no attempt to run the plant themselves. . . . To decide whether the sit-down is violent and lawless, one must remember that never before have such widespread labor struggles been resolved so quickly and so peacefully. Employers who formerly employed violence now refrained, possibly because of the danger of injuring machines in addition to men. (But was it not *truly* lawless for the National Association of Manufacturers to advise its members last year *not to obey* the



Wagner Relations Law?) . . . An historical view of the situation makes us realize that the sit-down is merely the transfer of the picket line into the plant. In the not too distant past, strikes and picket lines were regarded as illegal; in the present struggle to redefine labor rights, the trend seems in the direction of removing any stigma of illegality from the sit-down as well. Mr. Leon Green, noted constitutional lawyer, summarized the situation when he declared: "As long as the plant is occupied in good faith awaiting the adjustment of differences, occupation of the plant is not merely a privilege but the employees' right." . . . It is a strategic but peaceful method of forcing negotiation. The "crime" of the sit-down lies not in its illegality but in its effectiveness.

#### A LEGAL SHACKLE

THE defeat at Albany on April 21 of a bill which specified compulsory incorporation of trade unions is a distinct victory for the New York labor movement, which fought this bill bitterly. Militant unionists everywhere are on guard against the proposal for incorporation or "registration" of unions; it is a device, among others to which the vested interests in many states are turning now that the Wagner Act is validated. Behind a thin disguise of sympathy for tyrannized members of trade unions, the proposal is made to "register" unions in the manner of the British Trades and Disputes Act of 1927. This would include official recording of officers, periodic accounting of finances, and "careful supervision" of election and strike votes. That unscrupulous employers would have a powerful weapon is obvious. They could prevail upon the gov-

ernment to withdraw the charter of a militant union, for example, and could quickly judge the strength of a union (and its membership) from the financial statement. The proposal for compulsory incorporation can be made to seem sweetly reasonable. "It would become possible to sue a union, for it would then be a responsible organization." But the vast majority of labor unions are *now* suable. In 1922, for example, the United Mine Workers of America were assessed by the court, and they paid, \$27,500. Unions are responsible organizations, with long years of contractual experience. That more lawsuits against unions are not undertaken indicates that unions uphold their contracts, and that certain employers prefer to have recourse to injunctions, which are easier to obtain than jury verdicts. . . . Compulsory incorporation, they tell us, would free unions from tyrannical leadership; dues would be kept down and racketeering would be eliminated. They choose to forget that most unions (especially the industrial unions) are democratic and have comparatively low dues. That racketeering and misuse of funds exist is unfortunately true. It is, however, far less common than labor enemies would have us believe, and in any case it is an abuse which labor, left alone, can and will correct. Labor cannot afford to surrender so much of its power to agencies which may prove hostile. . . . Since business incorporates, we are told, why shouldn't labor? How blandly they forget that business corporations are organized for profit, and that this makes them fundamentally different from non-profit associations, such as labor unions. And since when is it *compulsory* for a business to incorporate, as the proposal provides for labor?

## It's Happening Now

#### Students Demonstrate Against War

ONE MILLION STUDENTS in colleges and high schools took part in nation-wide peace demonstrations on April 22. Among the highlights of this year's peace day activities were: the fact that they were conducted by the United Student Peace Committee made up of thirteen national student organizations; the widespread coöperation of school authorities with the students in arranging demonstrations; and in many places the taking of the Oxford pledge against war, and "fasting" for a day in order to provide food for the Spanish people; in Minnesota the proclamation of Gov. Elmer Benson designating April 22 as Peace Day. Nor was there much evidence this year of the repression and penalizing of students which have marked, in recent years, the April demonstrations.

#### Wanted: Lower Ideals for Teachers

A TEACHER from one of the cities in Illinois reports that she is being dismissed this year with a statement by the Superintendent that her ideals are too high for the town in which she is teaching and that he would advise her to seek employment in a university. There is good reason to believe that the real cause for the dismissal is the fact that the teacher has reached the maximum salary and that a new teacher (perhaps one with ideals sufficiently low) can be employed for several hundred dollars less.

#### High Time

AT LAST the conditions in Harlan County, Ky., are being given a full airing. Testimony was taken in April before the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee on the reign of terror

which has existed long before and since the famous "Battle of Evarts" in May 1931. Among the facts revealed was the complete destruction of all records of the coal operators' association which would show amounts spent on the prosecution and "framing" of the miners. . . . The sheriff of Harlan County, T. R. Middleton, was also president of a coal company, whose deputies were recommended for removal by a Grand Jury because of criminal charges against them in the courts. . . . One witness at Washington has already been threatened with "a burial in Arlington" unless he leaves Washington during the investigation. One of the blackest pages in the history of our civil liberties is slowly being exposed to the public.

### *Legislative Action for Mooney and Billings*

THE CAMPAIGN to free Tom Mooney and Warren Billings is advancing. The introduction of a bill in the California Assembly to provide a legislative pardon and exoneration for the two men has been announced. At the same time a petition for their immediate and unconditional release is being circulated in Congress by Representative William J. Fitzgerald, a member of the International Moulders' Union.

### *Thomas Mann on the Goettingen Festival*

THOMAS MANN, the distinguished author and exile from Nazi Germany, in his recent trip to this country, gave to reporters a most explicit explanation why American universities should not send their representatives to the Goettingen festival this summer:

"People should not go, since all the festivals there are political—all Nazi propaganda. They are all political—all Nazi!"

That some of our universities appreciate this elementary fact has been shown by lack of interest and refusal of invitations, and also by the information that some schools are sending men, notably teachers of German. . . . Do they wish to imbibe the well-known alien propaganda at its fountainhead?

### *Legislation*

PROSPECTS for the repeal of Michigan's teacher oath laws are good with the favorable report on the bill by the Senate State Affairs Committee. Protests, led by Michigan teachers, have had this influence even on the conservatives in the legislature. . . . Governor Martin of Washington has signed the bill to repeal the state criminal syndicalism law. . . . A sedition law to replace the old insurrection law of slave days in Georgia, under which many convictions have been made in recent years, was defeated in the Georgia assembly after passing the Senate. . . . In Ohio the Senate has passed a measure to provide seven million dollars in state aid for parochial and private schools. . . . Congressman Emanuel Celler has introduced into Congress

a bill to reestablish the right of asylum in the United States for political and religious refugees. . . . Also in Congress is the Nye-Kvale bill providing for the establishing of ROTC in educational institutions only when the enrollment in such a unit is elective and not compulsory.

### *Cheap Labor*

ON the basis of a "living wage" computation made by the National Industrial Conference Board, a woman needed \$16.53 a week to "live" in 1926. The Welfare Council of New York City has a present estimate of \$16.00. But how many working women receive this minimum? Upon available figures, in New York City, probably 70 per cent of the women at work receive wages below this estimate. The Home Relief Bureau found that 6,674 women workers, supporting families, needed relief checks to supplement their earnings. In other words, the state pays some two million dollars to make up for the low wages paid by employers.

### *Some Figures*

GENERAL MOTORS had a wonderful year—according to the financial pages. Net income: \$238,482,425.00. In size, output and sales one of the world's industrial giants. More significant in this light is the contract won from the corporation by the United Auto Workers.

### *The Other Side of a Question Explained*

IN session shortly after the Supreme Court had approved the Wagner Labor Act, the National Association of Manufacturers came out with a series of pious manifestos. Explaining that "organized labor leaders" had added new burdens to their endeavors to bring "complete re-employment", they indicated a new approach to the Wagner Act by an opinion that the government "owes the same duty to workers who do not desire to join a union as to those who do". Ever righteous, they promised the consumer the shield of "resistance to extreme and arbitrary demands [union wages] which threaten to skyrocket prices". Perhaps the coup de grace, though, was the admission that within its membership "are many pioneers in collective bargaining". Pioneers in the use of industrial espionage and tear gas were not, somehow, recalled.

### *Reduce on Your Vacation in Germany*

ACCORDING to a dispatch in The New York Times, every vacationist and hiker in Germany will carry a "traveling butter card". This card will be required for the purchase of butter by vacationists going from one part of the Reich to another. All that the German people need now is a removable gag to keep their mouths shut between the times they don't eat butter.

### *This Is "News" Also*

IN the face of the extreme partiality of a section of the American press to General Franco and fascism in Spain, the



news of the work of the Loyalists in caring for refugee children, which completely contradicts the lurid propaganda reporting of the Hearst press and some other papers, is gratifying. Lawrence Fernsworth of The New York Times made a visit to the camps and colonies for children established by the government and reported that, in his opinion, which he checked against the observations of other correspondents, Spanish women and children had not been treated with such kindness as they are now receiving for many years. . . . And opposed to the usual religious atrocity story, we have the news of religious freedom in loyalist Spain, confirmed by the words of Father Leocadio Lobo, a vicar in Madrid, that "especially when the fascists have been driven out, the Spanish Catholics will have full guarantees of their rights".

### **Nazism and Religion**

THE continuing conflict between Hitlerism and the Protestant and Catholic Churches in Germany seems to be but one indication of a mounting resentment among the German people at the monstrosities of the Nazi regime. Following the papal encyclical of Palm Sunday, there has been a new outburst against the Catholic Church in typical Nazi style. Slandorous accusations fill the first pages of the official press; collections for Catholic charities have been banned. The idea of an election in the Protestant Church has been abandoned. More significant is the news that elections to the Works Councils in the Labor Front have been postponed for another twelve months, and no elections have been held in the last two years. But Herr

Hess fulminates: "We knew God was with us Germans when he sent us Hitler." . . . Or was it someone else?

### **American Revolutionaries in Session**

ACCORDING to the press, the 3,000 delegates to the forty-sixth convention of the Daughters of the American Revolution, at the close of their sessions, congratulated each other on the serenity of their convention—which was a way of admitting that any incipient minority had been effectively crushed. The usual series of reactionary resolutions was passed. All on the best of grounds. The President's Court Plan was opposed without vocal opposition. The Nye-Kvale bill was disapproved as "interference with State education and a handicap to the defense policy of the United States". . . . We almost forgot, Mrs. William Becker, president-general of the D.A.R., was in turquoise blue lace. etc.

### **The Small Business Man**

"ONE of the most vexing problems" facing the newspaper publisher is "the determination of the status of the newspaper boy", according to one of the reports presented at the recent meeting of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association in New York. The question arises because of the operation of the Social Security Law. There is some danger, the report continues, that newsboys might be considered as newspaper employes "irrespective of the fact that the great majority may be operating under the so-called 'Little Merchant Plan'".

# *The Teachers Union in Action*

## **NATIONAL NEWS**

### **Proposed Convention Arrangements**

#### **FIRST DAY**

##### **A.M.**

1. Addresses of welcome by Mayor, Governor, President of Federation of Labor of Wisconsin, and President of Madison local.
2. Appointment of convention committees by President.

##### **P.M.**

1. Two speeches.
2. Reading of convention procedure.

##### **EVENING**

1. Local entertainment.

#### **SECOND DAY**

##### **A.M.**

1. One speech.
2. Reports of standing committees.

##### **P.M.**

1. Luncheon.
2. Reports of Regional Vice-Presidents.

##### **EVENING**

1. Meetings of all committees.

#### **THIRD DAY**

##### **A.M.**

1. One speech.
2. Reports of two committees.
3. Panel discussion on selected subject.

##### **P.M.**

1. Panel discussion on national and state legislation.
2. Adoption of legislative program.

#### **FOURTH DAY**

##### **A.M.**

No speeches.

1. Reports of committees.

##### **P.M.**

1. Panel discussion on organization plans.
2. Adoption of organization plans.

## FIFTH DAY

## A.M.

1. One speech.
2. Reports of committees.

## P.M.

1. Election.
2. Adjournment.

## Suggested Speakers for the Convention

1. Mrs. Roosevelt.
2. Miss Perkins.
3. Miss Mary Anderson.
4. Mr. Oliver, Vice-President Non-Partisan League.
5. Member Executive Committee of the A. F. of L.
6. Member Executive Committee of the C.I.O.
7. Leading progressive U. S. Senator.
8. Fraternal delegate.
9. Spencer Miller.
10. Representative of the TVA.
11. Representative of the Consumers League.
12. Speaker on the Supreme Court issue.

## Suggested Rules Governing Convention Program

1. Speakers not appearing on the printed program shall be allowed the platform only
  - (1) by approval of the Executive Council
  - (2) shall be presented only after the printed program has been completed.
2. Executive Secretary shall urge speakers to a definite time limit. (Probably not to exceed 30 minutes.)
3. Executive Council shall present tenets of American Federation of Teachers to convention at an early session. All resolutions involving principles of any tenet shall be declared covered by said tenet and the resolution need not be read in full at the convention.
4. No resolution or report shall be released to the public or the press until passed on by the convention. The literature and posters at the convention shall be carefully considered by the Executive Council and may appear at the convention hall only with the approval of the Executive Council.

## NEWS from LOCALS

**Teachers in Gary Reaffiliate.** Two hundred and fifty teachers and labor leaders attended a recent dinner in Gary, Ind., to welcome the newly formed Local 4 of the A.F.T. to the labor movement. Speakers were Miss Lillian Herstein, member of the Executive Board of the Chicago Women Teachers Union and Executive Board of the Chicago Federation of Labor; Irvin Kuenzli, national Secretary-Treasurer of the A.F.T.; Mrs. Mary Herrick, national Vice-President, A.F.T.; Carl Mullen, President of the Indiana State Federation of Labor, and others. At nine o'clock it was announced that in a school-wide refer-

endum conducted that day, the members of the Gary Teachers Federation, comprising about 90% of Gary teachers, had voted 2 to 1 for reaffiliation with the A.F.T., from which they had withdrawn sixteen years ago. According to the *Gary Post-Tribune*, this announcement was greeted "with wild acclaim!"

**Elyria Labor Backs Local A.F.T. Program.** The Elyria, O., Central Labor Union unanimously authorized the sending of letters to members of the Ohio legislature taxation committee and to Governor Davy, requesting them to oppose the continuation of inroads on the revenues provided for the support of the Foundation program. A delegation of four members of the C.L.U., including two teachers, visited Senator Hurley of the taxation committee to ask help in introducing adequate revenue measures for the program. The Elyria Federation of Teachers, Local 334, has also sponsored the formation of a credit union available to all members of the Federation and all school employees of Elyria.

**Minnesota State Federation of Teachers Holds Convention.** The Minnesota State Federation of Teachers Convention was held at Labor Temple, Saint Paul, toward the end of March. All locals were present with the exception of Mankato, which was snowbound. Resolutions were adopted concerning: a state wide salary study; a single salary schedule for men and women; inequalities of the Harrison-Black Bill then before U. S. Congress; the income tax and social security bills. It was also resolved to send a letter direct to Governor Benson as to the legislation needed for adequate educational revenues in cities of the first class. Professor Sorenson was elected president for the coming year, and Sara Neprude secretary-treasurer. Suggestions for a state-wide organizing committee and a state-wide grievance committee were adopted. At the final dinner meeting a report was made on the Superintendents' Convention in New Orleans. In this report it was pointed out as an anomaly that a liberal state like Minnesota should have so many reactionary school superintendents.

**Atlanta Teachers Ask for Salary Restoration.** The Atlanta, Ga., Public School Teachers Association, Local 89 of the A.F.T., has petitioned the Atlanta School Board for restoration of salaries. The resolution states: "Whereas, the Atlanta Public School Teachers Association has practiced highly professional action during the days of the depression by making every effort and sacrifice to keep intact the outstanding program of education in operation in Atlanta and . . . Whereas, the constantly rising cost of living will work increasing hardships unless there is a rise in salary levels. . . . Therefore, be it resolved that we, the Atlanta Public School Teachers Association, reaffirm our devotion to the best interest of education in Atlanta and that we respectfully request the Board of Education to



apply all money possible to as large a reduction of the heavy cut of teachers as possible, leading to a full restoration of salaries in order that we may be upon the same basis as other city employees. . . ." At the same meeting of the Atlanta Public School Teachers Association, Miss Ira Jarrell was reelected president for the coming year. According to vote of the association, members of the Executive Committee will be delegates to the Georgia State Federation of Labor Convention, which meets in Atlanta. The president was authorized to appoint delegates to the Atlanta Federation of Trades for the coming year.

**Conditions in Cincinnati.** Local 479, chartered last December, has been the special object of attack from the Downtown Property Association and the Chamber of Commerce of Cincinnati, O. Despite this concerted attack, the local has grown in its few months of existence to six or seven times its charter membership and now numbers several hundred teachers. Present conditions in Cincinnati make the existence of this local of great importance. Cincinnati, noted for its excellent financial condition throughout the depression, has one of the best school systems in the country and one of the best single salary schedules. Relatively small cuts were given during the depression. Recently, due to the activities of organized pressure groups, a special three mill levy for operation of the schools was defeated. The School Board refused to submit another levy at a special election but voted to close the schools six weeks early this school year and to open them six weeks late next fall. As a result, the children of Cincinnati will be out of school for a period of five months and the teachers will be without pay for a similar period.

**Cleveland Reports on Salaries.** Local 279, Cleveland, O., has prepared and published a Report of Investigation of Salary Conditions, covering Tax Revenues for Cuyahoga County and Cleveland School District, Per Pupil Costs in Eighteen Largest Cities, Teacher Salary Restoration in Sixteen Largest Cities. As a result of this report, the local voted to instruct the Salary Committee to accept only 100% restoration and in the event the Board of Education chose to give anything less, to call a special meeting of the local. The local also voted to make a study of the Ohio State Teachers Retirement System, this study to include a survey of retirement systems throughout the country. (Note: This is a splendid report. Locals are urged to make such surveys and publish such reports, submitting copies for file at the National Office. They are of great value to the organization. Ed.)

**Cleveland WPA Local Reports Varied Accomplishments.** A recent bulletin of Local 448, WPA Teachers, Cleveland, O., summarized many important accomplishments: Local 448 promoted and organized a twelve-week training course for teachers on the project. It drew up a

comprehensive plan for a permanent program of Adult Education and submitted it to 120 officials throughout the country. The plan stimulated much commendatory response. The Welfare Committee has made a practice of visiting teachers who have been reported and bringing messages of cheer and friendship. The favorable settlement of numerous grievances is also reported: *Case A:* Recreation worker laid off; excuse, "Not Enough Work", but strong indication of discrimination. *Case taken to Labor Relations Board;* worker reinstated. *Case B:* Teacher was to lose most of time because of small classes. Interview with supervisor resulted in teacher being transferred to more suitable and therefore more successful classes. . . . *Cases I and J:* Teachers laid off on Priority Ruling were rehired. *Case K (General):* New ruling that rehired teachers could receive no more than one-thirtieth of pay period each day of remainder of period was defeated. The Grievance Committee also prevented the cutting down of literary classes to a shortened period.

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## FIFTH DAY

A.M.

1. One speech.
2. Reports of committees.

P.M.

1. Election.
2. Adjournment.

## Suggested Speakers for the Convention

1. Mrs. Roosevelt.
2. Miss Perkins.
3. Miss Mary Anderson.
4. Mr. Oliver, Vice-President Non-Partisan League.
5. Member Executive Committee of the A. F. of L.
6. Member Executive Committee of the C.I.O.
7. Leading progressive U. S. Senator.
8. Fraternal delegate.
9. Spencer Miller.
10. Representative of the TVA.
11. Representative of the Consumers League.
12. Speaker on the Supreme Court issue.

## Suggested Rules Governing Convention Program

1. Speakers not appearing on the printed program shall be allowed the platform only
  - (1) by approval of the Executive Council
  - (2) shall be presented only after the printed program has been completed.
2. Executive Secretary shall urge speakers to a definite time limit. (Probably not to exceed 30 minutes.)
3. Executive Council shall present tenets of American Federation of Teachers to convention at an early session. All resolutions involving principles of any tenet shall be declared covered by said tenet and the resolution need not be read in full at the convention.
4. No resolution or report shall be released to the public or the press until passed on by the convention. The literature and posters at the convention shall be carefully considered by the Executive Council and may appear at the convention hall only with the approval of the Executive Council.

## NEWS from LOCALS

**Teachers in Gary Reaffiliate.** Two hundred and fifty teachers and labor leaders attended a recent dinner in Gary, Ind., to welcome the newly formed Local 4 of the A.F.T. to the labor movement. Speakers were Miss Lillian Herstein, member of the Executive Board of the Chicago Women Teachers Union and Executive Board of the Chicago Federation of Labor; Irvin Kuenzli, national Secretary-Treasurer of the A.F.T.; Mrs. Mary Herrick, national Vice-President, A.F.T.; Carl Mullen, President of the Indiana State Federation of Labor, and others. At nine o'clock it was announced that in a school-wide refer-

endum conducted that day, the members of the Gary Teachers Federation, comprising about 90% of Gary teachers, had voted 2 to 1 for reaffiliation with the A.F.T., from which they had withdrawn sixteen years ago. According to the *Gary Post-Tribune*, this announcement was greeted "with wild acclaim!"

**Elyria Labor Backs Local A.F.T. Program.** The Elyria, O., Central Labor Union unanimously authorized the sending of letters to members of the Ohio legislature taxation committee and to Governor Davy, requesting them to oppose the continuation of inroads on the revenues provided for the support of the Foundation program. A delegation of four members of the C.L.U., including two teachers, visited Senator Hurley of the taxation committee to ask help in introducing adequate revenue measures for the program. The Elyria Federation of Teachers, Local 334, has also sponsored the formation of a credit union available to all members of the Federation and all school employees of Elyria.

**Minnesota State Federation of Teachers Holds Convention.** The Minnesota State Federation of Teachers Convention was held at Labor Temple, Saint Paul, toward the end of March. All locals were present with the exception of Mankato, which was snowbound. Resolutions were adopted concerning: a state wide salary study; a single salary schedule for men and women; inequalities of the Harrison-Black Bill then before U. S. Congress; the income tax and social security bills. It was also resolved to send a letter direct to Governor Benson as to the legislation needed for adequate educational revenues in cities of the first class. Professor Sorenson was elected president for the coming year, and Sara Neprude secretary-treasurer. Suggestions for a state-wide organizing committee and a state-wide grievance committee were adopted. At the final dinner meeting a report was made on the Superintendents' Convention in New Orleans. In this report it was pointed out as an anomaly that a liberal state like Minnesota should have so many reactionary school superintendents.

**Atlanta Teachers Ask for Salary Restoration.** The Atlanta, Ga., Public School Teachers Association, Local 89 of the A.F.T., has petitioned the Atlanta School Board for restoration of salaries. The resolution states: "Whereas, the Atlanta Public School Teachers Association has practiced highly professional action during the days of the depression by making every effort and sacrifice to keep intact the outstanding program of education in operation in Atlanta and . . . Whereas, the constantly rising cost of living will work increasing hardships unless there is a rise in salary levels. . . . Therefore, be it resolved that we, the Atlanta Public School Teachers Association, reaffirm our devotion to the best interest of education in Atlanta and that we respectfully request the Board of Education to



apply all money possible to as large a reduction of the heavy cut of teachers as possible, leading to a full restoration of salaries in order that we may be upon the same basis as other city employees. . . ." At the same meeting of the Atlanta Public School Teachers Association, Miss Ira Jarrell was reelected president for the coming year. According to vote of the association, members of the Executive Committee will be delegates to the Georgia State Federation of Labor Convention, which meets in Atlanta. The president was authorized to appoint delegates to the Atlanta Federation of Trades for the coming year.

**Conditions in Cincinnati.** Local 479, chartered last December, has been the special object of attack from the Downtown Property Association and the Chamber of Commerce of Cincinnati, O. Despite this concerted attack, the local has grown in its few months of existence to six or seven times its charter membership and now numbers several hundred teachers. Present conditions in Cincinnati make the existence of this local of great importance. Cincinnati, noted for its excellent financial condition throughout the depression, has one of the best school systems in the country and one of the best single salary schedules. Relatively small cuts were given during the depression. Recently, due to the activities of organized pressure groups, a special three mill levy for operation of the schools was defeated. The School Board refused to submit another levy at a special election but voted to close the schools six weeks early this school year and to open them six weeks late next fall. As a result, the children of Cincinnati will be out of school for a period of five months and the teachers will be without pay for a similar period.

**Cleveland Reports on Salaries.** Local 279, Cleveland, O., has prepared and published a Report of Investigation of Salary Conditions, covering Tax Revenues for Cuyahoga County and Cleveland School District, Per Pupil Costs in Eighteen Largest Cities, Teacher Salary Restoration in Sixteen Largest Cities. As a result of this report, the local voted to instruct the Salary Committee to accept only 100% restoration and in the event the Board of Education chose to give anything less, to call a special meeting of the local. The local also voted to make a study of the Ohio State Teachers Retirement System, this study to include a survey of retirement systems throughout the country. (Note: This is a splendid report. Locals are urged to make such surveys and publish such reports, submitting copies for file at the National Office. They are of great value to the organization. Ed.)

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**Massachusetts State Branch Holds First Annual Conference.** The Massachusetts State Branch of the A.F.T. is holding its first annual conference in Boston, May 22. Speakers are to be Eduard Lindeman of the New School for Social Research, Dean Henry W. Holmes of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Dr. J. Raymond Walsh, Vice-President of the A.F.T., and Robert J. Watt, Secretary-Treasurer of the Massachusetts State Federation of Labor. The conference will commemorate the centenary of the work of Horace Mann under the title: "Massachusetts Schools Today—One Hundred Years After Horace Mann." There will be afternoon round table discussion groups on educational and teacher issues such as child welfare in the schools, economic standards of teachers, teachers' working conditions, certification and professional rating, taxes and the schools, etc. The Conference will be the first general meeting of all union teachers in the state. The Conference form was adopted instead of a Convention form in order to reach many non-union teachers through the general discussion of teacher problems. It is hoped that the Conference will forward organization.

**Texas Locals Seek Tenure Law.** Locals 336, 462, and 485 of Texas have cooperated with the Texas Classroom Teachers Association in attempting to secure the passage of a well-studied tenure law. However, the Legislative Committee of the Texas State Teachers Association has stubbornly opposed the tenure bill. This Legislative Committee is composed principally of past presidents of the T.S.T.A., including one business manager of a metropolitan school system. Thanks to the efforts of this Legislative Committee and of a generally reactionary public school administration, the tenure bill remains in sub-committee as the biennial session of the Texas legislature enters its final month. The result of the opposition of the Legislative Committee of the Texas State Teachers Association has been a wide-spread rebellion against the leadership, a rebellion which promises to bring about either a greater degree of democracy or else a rift in the Association. In attempts to block the passage of the tenure bill, the legislative representatives brought pressure to bear on school boards to have teachers restrained from working with the Committee on Tenure of the Classroom Teachers Association. As a consequence, some teachers were prevented from attending legislative hearings and others were threatened with dismissal for "agitating". Organized labor is supporting Texas teachers in their struggle for tenure, the A.F.T. locals having secured the endorsement of the tenure bills by the Texas State Federation of Labor at its 1936 Convention.

**Chattanooga Central Labor Union Protests Attack on Highlander Folk School.** Mysterious in its origin, of unknown authority, coming to light only in the form of second-hand statements by an American Legion leader who claims to have seen the report, an alleged investigation of the Highlander Folk School at Monteagle, Tennessee, was

condemned by the Chattanooga Central Labor Union as an indirect attack on local labor. The resolution of the Chattanooga Central Labor Union states: "Whereas, a mysterious investigation of the Highlander Folk School is reported to have been made by a member of the state highway patrol; and . . . Whereas, the statement that the delegates of the Highlander Folk School local of the A.F.T. were seated [in the Chattanooga C.L.U.] by "hook or crook" is maliciously false; and . . . Whereas organized labor has no need of volunteer snoopers from outside its own ranks to investigate the integrity of its own members; and . . . Whereas, many of our members have visited the school on numerous occasions . . . and know the work of the school for the past three years; and . . . Whereas, these members, in whom we have the highest confidence, report that the school is conducted according to the highest standards of scholarship and ethics. . . . Therefore be it Resolved, that the Chattanooga Central Labor Union . . . goes on record as condemning such attacks on the Highlander Folk School as indirect attacks on the Chattanooga labor movement and the organized labor movement in general; and be it further Resolved, that we express confidence in the conduct of the school and of its work; and be it further Resolved, that we suggest a more fruitful field of investigation of drunkenness and profanity, to-wit, any convention of the American Legion. . . ."

**Trouble in Wisconsin Rapids.** The outcome of the Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, city elections on April 6 was unfavorable to the teachers of Local 421 because of the defeat of the union candidates. At its first meeting after the elections, the Wisconsin Rapids Board of Education ordered the immediate dismissal of Joseph Berger, president of the local. This action of the Board was met by considerable protest, especially from labor and labor sympathizers and by a walk-out of 200 students. The next move of the Board of Education was a decision to withhold contracts until the end of the year, an action which makes the dismissal of other union teachers appear imminent. Such further dismissals will not be accomplished, however, without some difficulty. The Central Labor Union of Wisconsin Rapids is exerting all its energies to secure the reinstatement of Mr. Berger. The unions are swinging into action with a state investigation and a mass meeting.

**Conference to Safeguard Education in Paterson.** Local 482 of Paterson, New Jersey, reports a very successful Conference to Safeguard Education, held jointly with delegates from local labor organizations. A general result of this conference was the beginning or renewal of ties between classroom teachers and other workers. A concrete result of the conference was a later mass meeting for all teachers. At this mass meeting the union policy of opposing the signing of all waivers was adopted while other groups were still debating and defining qualities and kinds of waivers. . . . At a recent meeting of the Paterson Central



Union as labor Union, teacher delegates were appointed to serve on the Legislative Committee and the Resolutions Committee.

**Central Labor Council Urges Sick Pay for Oakland Teachers.** In a long resolution, which enters thoroughly into the prevailing situation, the Alameda County, California, Central Labor Council called upon the school board of Oakland to grant ten days sick leave with pay to all teachers in Oakland public schools who may be incapacitated by sickness, disease or accident. . . . Among candidates for School Board in the April elections in Oakland was a member of Carpenters Union, Local 36, Mr. Vane

Dart. Mr. Dart's program favored: 1. Smaller classes with more individual attention for school children; 2. Improved facilities for mentally and physically handicapped children; 3. Ten days sick leave with pay for teachers; 4. Extension of organized recreational centers throughout the city; 5. Free medical, dental, and optical care for all school children. Mr. Dart's wife, Anna Dart, is a former member of Local 349, Oakland and Berkeley, and is now active in the local at San José. Mr. Dart received 13,000 votes. A member of Local 349, Mrs. Leila Thompson, running for the City Council of Berkeley on May 4, has received the endorsement of the local as well as financial and other active support.

# Among the New Books

## A Tough-Minded Approach to Education

**EDUCATION AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE.** ZALMEN SLESINGER. New York: Covici-Friede, 1937. 312 pages. \$3.00.

The publication of this book with the sanction of Teachers College, Columbia University, is in itself something of an argument against one of its principal contentions—that liberal education is too completely dominated by our capitalist economy to permit either thoroughgoing attacks upon that economy or effective plans for its correction.

Certainly Dr. Slesinger's book is such an attack and plan, and it is weighted with so much factual evidence as to constitute it a weapon which those who defend the present order may well fear. Yet the book carries a cordial introduction by Dr. William H. Kilpatrick, a great liberal educator and one of Dr. Slesinger's targets; and it grew out of a doctoral dissertation which, however much the faculty may have disagreed with its thesis, was at least officially approved.

This point is made because, while *Education and the Class Struggle* is a book deserving of a wide audience, it is in one sense defeatistic. That is, it separates liberal education so dualistically from Marxian education that one finishes the book with a sense of almost complete skepticism as to the efficacy within the established order. This dualism is not, as a matter of fact, always fair to the actual situation. Witness, for example, the common opposition of liberals and collectivists to fascism. Witness also the fact that, as this book itself testifies, even under American capitalism we may discover some degree of genuine freedom of thought in our educational institutions—a degree which, though small, may be made perhaps larger not by utter hopelessness toward the present order but by determination to strengthen whatever democratic values still exist.

Dr. Slesinger has on the whole so much of importance to say, and he says it in so readable a fashion, that one hastens to get past such necessary criticisms in order to stress his positive contribution. The pivot of his argument, that America is essentially though often subtly class-structured, is one which has been almost totally neglected by social scientists. The consequence for education of demonstrating this class structure, as Dr. Slesinger does in considerable degree, is obviously enormous: it requires the teacher to face the necessity of integrating his logical techniques in the classroom with realistic political and economic techniques in the community. It requires, in other words, that education become a vital part of the growing struggle of the wage-earners in America for genuine rather than illusory democracy. And this the author

insists means the unionization and radicalization of labor, agriculture, middle class groups, intellectuals and youth—a program of militant action adjusted to American conditions.

As to the book's subsidiary theme, that the liberal educator's program for social reconstruction is inadequate, the arguments when qualified as suggested above are again frequently compelling. Dr. Slesinger takes issue, for example, with the tender-mindedness of those who, by their abject faith in persuasive methods alone, fail to estimate accurately the power of the forces of reaction, and thus inadequately prepare for defense against those forces. If the author had done no more than call attention to this one weakness in our predominant philosophy of education, his book would warrant attention by every teacher who is not so liberal as to be illiberal toward a tough-minded approach to education.

THEODORE BRAMELD.

## Democracy's Fight for Life

**SPAIN IN ARMS.** ANNA LOUISE STRONG. Henry Holt. 85 pages. Cloth \$1.00, paper \$0.25.

This small book by Anna Louise Strong gives us not only what the Spaniards call "cuadros de costumbres" (life and customs of the people) after the outbreak of the military revolt, erroneously called "the civil war," but also the psychological reactions of representative individuals of the different classes during this transition in the political and economic life of the country.

Without going very deeply into the causes, significance, or extent of the changes now going on in Spain, the author succeeds in presenting very humanly the manner in which the people are meeting the exigencies of the war. In her tour of inspection, she moves from the newly-formed collective farms to cultural groups, from government officials to military men, and after discussing the atrocities committed by the rebels, presents a very vivid picture of life in the trenches, the morale and the humor of the militiamen, and the heroism of the Lister and International Brigades. A very small chapter is devoted to the two great labor federations.

The book ends with a chapter, "Whither Spain and whither Europe?" in which she discusses the international aspects and the symbolic meaning of the war in Spain for the rest of Europe. Miss Strong comes to the conclusion, which is generally accepted by Loyalist sympathizers, that a victory or a defeat for democracy in Spain will be a victory or defeat for democracy all over Europe.

The main interest of the book lies in her interview with the leaders of different factions, and it is through the statements made

to her by these leaders that we get a glimpse of what we may expect in Spain after the forces of Franco are defeated. At the same time, we become aware of the fact that the Loyalist ranks, while a heterogeneous group, are in full accord on the main issues, that the foundations for a new order are already laid, and that victory for the Loyalists will not destroy the proverbial individualism of the people of Spain, but will rather give it a firm basis and a genuine meaning. That victory, of so much importance to friends of democracy everywhere, may indeed make of Spain the bulwark of human liberation and "the tomb of fascism".

PEDRO VILLA FERNANDEZ.

### Workers' Education Pamphlets

I AM A WOMAN WORKER. 1936. 50 cents.

TEACHING ECONOMICS IN WORKERS' CLASSES. 1936. 35 cents.

THE COMPANY UNION IN PLAN AND PRACTICE. Lincoln Fairley. 1936. 35 cents.

THE WORKER AND GOVERNMENT. Lois MacDonald and Emanuel Stein. 1935. 35 cents.

(Affiliated Schools for Workers, 302 East 35 Street, New York.)

**E**VEN teachers who have no expectation of engaging in workers' education themselves may learn much from reading some of these pamphlets of the Affiliated Schools. The Affiliated Schools have a long and honorable record of attempts to bring to workers some of the benefits of progressive education method, to help workers to express themselves, and to relate them constructively to their own environment and problems. In a way, the Schools represent much the same sort of outreach from the more to the less privileged that we found in the best of the social settlement movement in the last century. Such an outreach has its necessary limitations, in that the "social distance" between teacher and taught is always there, and the school, like the settlement, has to work out its program in the midst of an atmosphere of potential criticism on the part of those who furnish its support. However, the Schools have one outstanding advantage, and that is that they are dealing with workers as workers—not as mothers, fathers, housewives, children—hence their program has an educational sharpness that would be impossible in either a settlement movement or adult education in general. The students are reaching out to express and understand their working problems. It is this that makes the publications of the Affiliated Schools of especial value for the teacher unfamiliar with labor questions.

*I Am a Woman Worker* is a group of sketches by the students themselves, telling incidents of their own working lives. They are grouped about the topics Getting a Job, Life in the Factory, Open Shops and Company Unions, Trade Unions and Organized Shops, On Strike. They give a wealth of concrete detail and convey the feeling of immediate experience.

*Teaching Economics in Workers' Classes* gives advice on teaching techniques by a number of Affiliated School instructors. Read it and become modest over the degree of liveliness of your own teaching in the social sciences!

*The Company Union in Plan and Practice* is a useful, objective analysis by Professor Fairley of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. However, for the teacher who wishes to familiarize himself with this field, I should recommend also the recent government study of company unions summarized in the Monthly Labor Review for October and December, 1935 and the lively book and recent pamphlet, *Company Unions*, both by Robert Dunn of the Labor Research Association.

*The Worker and Government*, by Lois MacDonald and Emanuel Stein of New York University, is a splendid piece of serious work in small compass. It shows the myriad ways in which government not only protects but restricts labor. The role of the courts in labor disputes is portrayed especially well. Teachers who think they already know their political science will be surprised to find

how much that is new emerges from this type of functional treatment, from analyzing each problem as it affects the worker.

DOROTHY W. DOUGLAS.

### A Stack of Good Fiction

A BOOK OF CONTEMPORARY SHORT STORIES. Edited by DOROTHY BREWSTER. Macmillan. 754 pages.

BREAD AND WINE. IGNAZIO SILONE. Harper. 319 pages. \$2.50.

THE OLIVE FIELD. RALPH BATES. Dutton. 475 pages. \$2.50.

RAINBOW FISH. RALPH BATES. Dutton. 242 pages. \$2.00.

THE INVADERS. STUART DAVID ENGSTRAND. Knopf. \$2.50.

**T**HE LITERATURE OF THE PEOPLE—"popular front", anti-fascist democratic literature—thrusts itself upon our attention with increasing authority. More and more of it is being written, and its literary expression reveals more and more the power and delight of creative art. In Professor Brewster's excellent introduction to her collection of short stories, she states that she found her material dictating a division into the proletarian and the bourgeois; and when she examined the difference, she discovered that it was not merely in social point of view, but in manner of writing as well. The proletarian stories are short and strictly contemporary, but the bourgeois tend to be long romantic narratives of life as it once was. Anyone desirous of studying the relation between the form and the theme of the short story will find her volume indispensable.

Among the best stories in Miss Brewster's book is one by Ignazio Silone, who is at the present time the foremost Italian anti-fascist novelist. Though a refugee from Italy, he gives in his new novel, *Bread and Wine*, so vivid a picture of the conditions of life under Mussolini that the reader suspects he has made a secret trip back like his hero. In this novel he takes his account beyond the period of *Fontamara* into the contemporary scene. *Fontamara* was the novel which gave an unforgettable account of remote and ignorant peasants' reaction to a dictatorship they became aware of only when it violated ancient local rights with the connivance of the old oppressors of the village and the new racketeering landlords. It was written with a caustic humor like a thin sour Italian wine. In *Bread and Wine* the wine has turned bitter, but it has gained in strength, and the book is doubtless the gauge of a growing popular opposition to fascism that now actually exists in Italy. The hero is an old revolutionary who returns to resume revolutionary work in the garb of a priest. But whether he prods those sunk in a stupor of resignation or guides the discontented, to avoid discovery "Don Paulo" is forced into the most wary and thorough understanding of every person he meets. This necessity has imposed upon the book a different method from that of *Fontamara*. In the earlier novel, though the peasants were treated sympathetically, they were lumped together as a simple herd, animated by common mores and superstitions. But the very despotism of the dictatorship by increasing the economic struggle for survival had created dissensions among them and individualized them. "Don Paulo" becomes, like a novelist, an expert in the distinction of motive; for with him it is a matter of life or death. But the doubtful must be treated since the work must spread; and in the end, discovered by the secret police, the hero is killed.

Meanwhile there is another character, a venerable priest, long since retired, and also killed before the end of the book. Don Benedetto was once the teacher of "Don Paulo", and his wisdom remains a complement to the younger man's activity, which, though relentless, tends to become more desperate and cynical. In a society that is reducing men more and more to the level of the slave, Don Benedetto remains aloof as an example of the natural dignity of man. He, too, retains like a stoic his belief in man's integrity and yet he is too old to act, and goes to his death for influencing the action of others. Silone would agree with Malraux that in circumstances such as these, only through the willingness to sacrifice himself for the common good does man find himself, does he gain an awareness of his essential value as a human being. But whereas Malraux believes this consciousness comes only through the union of principle and action, Silone tends to separate the



two, embodying them in two different but complementary characters, though both come to the same martyrdom in the end.

But in countries where fascism has not yet fixed itself in power Silone's desperate paradox is less evident. Philosophically Bates' task in *The Olive Field* was simpler. Men have still the time to unite against an oppression which, however distressing, has not yet tightened into a fascist ascendancy. And so Bates can present characters in whom humor and virility are still active and for whose heroism the circumstances offer a readier cooperation. His Spanish peasants of the period before the present civil war, though disillusioned about their landlords and the clerics who abet their indolence, their luxury and their indifference to the welfare of the poor, have been left the chance to drop their disillusion about themselves, to throw off their acceptance of their masters' derogation of them, and assert their latent dignity as human beings. Few novels have been written in which the conflict between our broader social interests and our personal relationships is more naturally and vividly presented.

Since *The Olive Field* Bates has written another novel, with the curious title of *Rainbow Fish*, which is bound to win him a new audience, and establish him as a novelist who is not limited to such direful themes as civil war. This later novel is of the decadence, and like most novels of this sort it employs a technique of less direct statement, the stream of consciousness technique so appropriate to those who drift with the circumstances of a dissolving civilization until they find themselves in the forefront of tragedy. For a variety of reasons, and Bates depicts them all, a group of men find themselves in one of the final refuges for those whom modern society rejects; they have become divers for sponges off the islands of Greece. But even here, as Conrad wrote earlier in *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, human dignity asserts itself. It is not for all, and it is not against the depravity of man; it is against the forces of nature in a storm at sea, and the men leave no record of their heroism; they are only, some of them tossed up as corpses, for the indifferent observation of those who live through guile and treachery.

This novel of Bates is like a corrosive acid thrown against our good intentions, and it is pleasant to turn away to a more cheerful proletarian theme. *The Invaders* has several marks of distinction. It is written by an American, and therefore proves that the good novelists of peasant life are not all Europeans. It contains a strike, and not only is the strike won, but its happening is skillfully woven into the normal conflict between the small farmer and the forces of nature. And finally, the farmers in the book are not dejected paper characters but robust fellows capable of passion in love and in the struggle for a better life. There is no CIO in *The Invaders*, but after reading the novel, one can no longer doubt the probability of its existence. The novel sweeps like a blast of the open air through the steam heated corridors of our American fiction.

EDWIN BERRY BURGUM.

### Book Notes and Recommendations

WITH THE NEWS COLUMNS full of the victories won by labor with its newest weapon, the sit-down strike, and with the editorial columns full of attacks upon it for its "illegality", a timely pamphlet in the League for Industrial Democracy series cannot fail to be of interest to thoughtful readers. It is *Sit-Down* (10 cents) by Joel Seidman, with a prefatory article by Robert Morris Lovett, *A G. M. Stockholder Visits Flint*, reprinted from *The Nation*. Joel Seidman gives a useful introduction to the entire subject of the sit-down strike, its history in America and abroad, the attitude of the courts and police toward it, its relation to the particular problems of labor in 1937, the methods by which the strikers maintain discipline and morale. A useful list of suggested readings is included. Both Seidman and Lovett express the conclusions which most friends of labor share, "that mere ownership does not carry with it all possible rights with reference to a factory. Those who work in it, who make it produce with their labor and who depend upon it for their livelihood, should likewise have a voice in its control. Those who invest their lives in an industry

have at least as much at stake as those who merely invest their money. . . . It is interesting to note that, in the sit-down strike, workers are re-establishing the control over the tools of production that they lost with the Industrial Revolution." This pamphlet cuts through the purely legalistic arguments of injunction-granting, stock-holding judges.

Many of our readers will be interested in the publications of the Educational Department of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, of 3 West 16 Street, New York City. Among pamphlets for union members everywhere are *The Handbook of Trade Union Methods* (25 cents), a readable and informative treatment of some of the major problems of trade union organization; *The ABC of Parliamentary Law* (25 cents), of special importance for the conduct of union meetings; *A Manual for Trade Union Speakers* (25 cents). In addition there is a series of one-act plays and mass recitations of a sort that help to enliven union meetings and clarify some of the issues facing workers.

BORIS GAMZUE.

## Correspondence

Letters dealing with issues of interest to union teachers will be printed in these columns. Inclusion of a letter does not necessarily mean that the Editors endorse its sentiments.

### A High Order of Comradeship

Dear Friends:

It seems timely to me to proclaim to those who might like to know, that the American Federation of Teachers through its unions offers a unique and essential opportunity to all who teach. We in the United States have recently lived through difficult years—insecure economically for teachers, insecure politically, in some respects. Furthermore, we cannot now feel any too ready to entrust our interests to the indirect and indifferent management of any one of the political parties. As educators we are in duty compelled to assume responsibility, not alone for leadership of the young, but also for contribution of our factual knowledge and civic perspective to our community as a whole. Because of our insecurity and also our responsibility, we should have immediate and functioning representation in public affairs. It seems to me, therefore, that a teachers union of real significance—politically conscious, educationally responsible, protective of teachers as a class—is a vital and growing need in every community.

This year I joined the Boston Teachers Union in a sort of desperation. Formerly I had not found any group representative of, nor working coherently for, my social ideals. The Union is answering that need. At last I find an opportunity to express my citizenship, not by mere voting, but by a direct chance to aid in formulating policies for immediate action.

Democracy seems to me very precious. Thus I fear observable Fascist tendencies in the United States. In the Teachers Union the ideals and practices of democracy are energetically pursued. All public issues of importance that affect the welfare of children, or that touch on education, are ever the concern of the Union, which actively influences legislation on such matters. It is of great satisfaction and inspiration to be, through my Union representatives, in close touch with legislative action about which I am most concerned.

Through joining this organization, I must admit, I have an enhanced feeling of security as to my personal economic status. My work as a teacher seems more a part of the social fabric, in that I am to be less at the mercy of social forces, more a cooperative factor therein, and one no longer isolated as an individual or as a member of a class.

Finally, there is to me a deep satisfaction in working with others who speak the same "language," who, without "talking shop" are

obviously marching in the same ranks and working for common aims. It is comradeship of a high order—membership in this education-centered, civic-minded organization, which, I am convinced, offers the promise of a new dignity and social value to the teaching profession.

Sincerely yours,

ADELE PARKER.

### A Notable Victory

(Note: This letter was sent to the national office of the A.F.T., but because of the great interest it holds, it is being printed in these columns.)

Dear Sir:

Under date of February 16, 1937, a charter was granted to the Adams Township Federation of Teachers. At the time the charter was granted we had an enrollment of 31 members. When the charter came through it was found to have only the names of 13 members. The question immediately arose of why the entire enrollment was not included. A resolution was adopted to the effect that I, as president, should write to the central office asking them to issue us a charter on which all names were inscribed.

An understanding of local conditions may help explain the matter. Situated in the heart of Pennsylvania with no other local of the A.F.T. located near us until recently, the teachers took a step that very seriously jeopardized their position as teachers. The fact is that for a period they had suffered a regime of intimidation and discrimination that has few comparisons. The teachers stood for it for eight years. When the chance came to affiliate with the A.F.T. they jumped at the chance. There were threats of dismissal of the entire group. In fact a blanket dismissal was issued to all teachers. A committee of the A.F.T. backed by committees from each mine local of the district, comprising about 80 per cent of the voting population, presented themselves to the meeting of the school teachers and in consequence won a hundred per cent victory.

Considering the chances taken; considering the power of the board politically in this district, and finally considering the extreme subjugation of the teachers in the past, the victory is a matter of great pride to each individual teacher. Consequently each teacher enrolled demands that her name appear on the charter to be framed and hung where all the world can see it.

Will you please give this matter your attention? I am enclosing a list of the names that should appear on the charter. Thanking you for any consideration shown, I am,

Yours truly,

RAY C. McNULTY,  
South Fork, Pa.

### From a Congressman-Member

Having noticed your article on "Teachers and the Crisis in W.P.A." in the January-February issue of THE AMERICAN TEACHER, I am prompted to send you the enclosed copy of a statement on the unemployment question which a number of members of Congress recently issued. The draft of the statement is my own work, and since I am a member of the A.F.T., I thought you might possibly be interested.

Sincerely yours,

JERRY VOORHIS.

### WE CAN BEAT UNEMPLOYMENT

Remarks of

HON. JERRY VOORHIS OF CALIFORNIA

In the House of Representatives

Tuesday, March 9, 1937

Government Works Program Necessary and Unavoidable—Work for All Should Be Useful, Productive, Conserve National Resources

Mr. Voorhis: Mr. Speaker, I have the honor to submit the following statement on behalf of forty-one members of Congress.

Continuance of a government work program as one measure of

attacking unemployment is necessary and unavoidable. That program must, therefore, be put on a stable, economically sound basis before this Congress adjourns.

America today needs to have many kinds of work done which private industry cannot do. Examples are slum clearance and housing for the lowest-income group, soil and water conservation, reforestation, flood and drought control, prevention of stream pollution, power development, safety work, and many others.

### Useful and Necessary Jobs for All

Due to conditions never before faced in human history, millions of our people are still unemployed. Unless fundamental corrective measures are taken, there will be millions unemployed for years to come. Either they will be thrown back on private or local charity, which cannot possibly care for them, or they will be given a government dole, or they will be put to work by the government at useful and necessary jobs. Only the last of these alternatives offers hope for our nation's future.

It must be a principle of American government that every citizen who is able and willing to work shall have work. If private industry cannot give jobs to all our people, then jobs for our unemployed can and must be provided on government works projects.

### Principles of Government Work

The program of government work should be set up according to the following principles:

*First.* Work for all who are able and willing to work and cannot find private employment.

*Second.* The work to be as useful, productive, and efficient as any work anywhere.

*Third.* People to be hired for government works not because they are "on relief" but because they need a job and are able to do it efficiently.

*Fourth.* Facts about the amount of unemployment and the opportunities for employment in private industry to be collected; and the government-work program to be enlarged when private industry lays people off and to be cut down when private industry hires them back.

*Fifth.* No waste; no made-work; but every project to be planned so it will create a dollar's worth of wealth and permanent social value for every dollar spent. This requires that there must be enough money appropriated to allow a reasonable expenditure for materials and equipment, as well as for wages.

*Sixth.* Government work to be planned so it will enable the people it employs to develop and maintain the kinds of skill and ability which are most likely to be in demand in private industry.

*Seventh.* Government projects to be definitely planned to stimulate all industry and open new opportunities for Americans. Conserving soils and developing new fertile lands will do this. Low cost housing will do it. Cheaper power will do it. So will other projects.

*Eighth.* The recreation, theatre, educational and fine arts projects to be continued and improved with a view to developing the hidden creative talents of all groups of citizens in America and giving the benefits of these talents to all society.

*Ninth.* The program must be a Federal program, since unemployment is a national problem and most of our needed public works are of interstate character. It will have to be largely financed with Federal funds, with local sponsors' contribution based on their ability to make such contributions.

*Tenth.* By and large, the program should not be financed by



## Contributors' Column

THEODORE BRAMELD is head of the Philosophy Department at Adelphi College.

EDWIN BERRY BURGUM is chairman of the college section of Local 5, and associate professor of English at New York University.

DOROTHY DOUGLAS is a member of the Editorial Board of the American Teacher. She is in the economics department at Smith College. Mrs. Douglas is co-author of the book *Child Workers in America* which has just been issued by Robert M. McBride and Co.

PEDRO VILLA FERNANDEZ is a member of the Spanish Department at Washington Square College. He has taught at the Casa de Campo in Madrid, and in the summer school of the University of Oviedo. He is working actively with the North American Committee to aid Spanish Democracy.

FRANCIS J. GORMAN is president of the International Textile Workers Union and a leading spokesman for a Farmer-Labor Party.

HAROLD CURTIS HAND is a member of the Executive and Defense Committees of Local 442. He is Associate Professor of Education at Stanford University and a contributor to educational journals.

IRVIN R. KUENZLI is secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers.

LUCY SPRAGUE MITCHELL is chairman of the working council of The Cooperative School for Student Teachers.

PAUL W. PREISLER is president of Local 420, St. Louis, Missouri. He teaches at the University of Washington in that city.

NORMAN STUDER teaches at The Little Red School House in New York City.

SARA T. WALSH is legislative representative of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Teachers.

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*Second.* It will rebuild and maintain the morale of our people.

*Third.* It will save our natural resources for our own generation and for generations to come.

*Fourth.* It will keep our business prosperous by maintaining its market.

### An English Author Asks Help for Spain

Dear Sir:

Some time ago I was a visitor in your country. I addressed a number of the people at meetings to aid the Spanish people and their government. Before returning to Spain I wish to address a few words to your readers through your "reader's correspondence column."

It seems impossible that I do not know you—the civil war in Spain and what I have been through has torn away from my mind all its old reticence, all the barriers it had set between me and other men and women. I was like any other democrat, I suppose—I had my beliefs, at times I had doubts, and sometimes I did not care. All that has gone.

I have seen desperate, half-armed, inexperienced democrats blunder forward through a hail of machine gun fire under a blazing sun—into certain death, to defend their liberty. I have seen a man fall by my side and clutch my feet in his last moments, saying, "Do not leave me." And the vacillation has gone out of me. I have seen a wounded mother drag her three-year-old son from beneath a tangle of iron and fallen masonry—you must listen to me, you must force yourself to see this. I have seen a mother frantic with grief and her reason gone, beat the body of her little son with fumbling nerveless hands, in some blind, forgotten instinct striving to bring back life to him. I also have had to crouch into cover as Italian fascist planes roared overhead.

I say the vacillation has gone out of me—everything I can do I must do, this immense drama of liberty has taken possession of me. I know I have the right to ask you to help. Your own imagination, placing you among the horrors of the Fascist invasion of Spain, will break down the wall between us.

I am returning to fight in the ranks of the International brigade. I tell you we shall fight better for your help. One fights better when one is not lonely in the world as our enemies would have us be.

Sincerely,

RALPH BATES.

(Note: Funds for the Spanish government's cause may be sent to Mr. Kuenzli at the national office of the A.F.T.)

### CORRECTION

Walter R. Douthett, whose letter *Superintendent to the Defense* has appeared in these columns, is Superintendent of Schools in Darby, Pa.

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We hope for the help of our present readers, and for their cooperative efforts in the hundreds of communities where they have residence. Surely all can do something, each according to his own inclinations and powers, and thus give *THE SOCIAL FRONTIER* the necessary assurance for the future that would solve the persistent problem of meeting expenses.

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# Rules Relating to Membership In the American Federation of Teachers

1. General rules pertaining to membership are found in Article III of the Constitution.
2. Superintendents may not be admitted to membership since the union was founded as a class-room teachers' organization. In some rural communities the term "superintendent" is applied to principals who teach and have little or no power to "hire and fire". Locals may use their discretion in admitting such persons.
3. The precedent has been established of admitting to membership, in the same manner as other teachers, principals who teach but who do not have power to "hire and fire" teachers. Constitutions of locals may or may not provide for the admission of such persons.
4. Educational clerks, school librarians, and school nurses, employed by the same governing board which employs the teachers, may be admitted. In no case, however, should such persons be admitted if a jurisdictional dispute with any other union is involved.
5. The Executive Council, on December 30, 1936, voted that Y.W.C.A. secretaries doing educational work may be admitted until such time as a definite union policy is adopted by the Y.W.C.A.
6. At the same meeting of the Council (December 30, 1936) it was voted that individuals in private schools may be granted membership-at-large.
7. WPA teachers may be admitted to membership provided the work they are doing may reasonably be defined as teaching. Those persons may be included in locals of public school teachers or organized separately. In case of separate organization the public school local has no jurisdiction over the WPA local. Separate charters are issued.
8. Teachers in colleges and universities may be admitted to membership in public school locals or organized in separate locals with independent jurisdiction. Local circumstances determine the method of organization.
9. Teachers working entirely independently of any public school system or university (such as private tutors, private music teachers, etc.) are not eligible for membership.
10. Engineers, custodians, mechanics, motion picture operators, stage hands, etc., are not admitted because of eligibility to membership in other unions. Close cooperation with these groups is urged for the good of the schools.
11. In deciding upon "border line cases" locals should be guided by the fact that the American Federation of Teachers is primarily a class-room teachers' organization. No individuals should be admitted who in any way would endanger freedom of speech and democratic participation of union members in discussion of teacher problems.
12. It is generally understood that union members, when assigned to executive positions with power to "hire and fire" teachers, will surrender membership in the union. An administrator who has been a member of the union should fully understand that the program of the union affords a firm foundation for a good school program.
13. A united membership should strive to eliminate the antiquated, military type of administrative control which still exists in some schools. Constructive, cooperative supervision should replace fear, inefficient rating, and destructive criticism. Democracy cannot well be taught in an autocratic school system. Locals should be mindful of these facts in determining rules for membership.